# THE SOCIOLOGICAL VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

## LA PHYSIOLOGIE MORALE

*One Volume in 8vo (Paris, 1904. P. V. Stock)*

---

## HEREDITY AND SELECTION IN SOCIOLOGY

*Demy 8vo. Cloth.*

PRICE **12/6** NET.

"A most praiseworthy and suggestive work, . . . . should certainly be studied by every serious thinker."—*Morning Post.*

"His book is packed with scientific and sociological facts, and it gives the reader healthy intellectual exercise."—*Christian World.*

PUBLISHED BY A. AND C. BLACK, 4 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.

AGENTS

AMERICA . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
64 & 66 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
AUSTRALASIA THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
205 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE
CANADA . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, LTD.
ST. MARTIN'S HOUSE, 70 BOND STREET, TORONTO
INDIA . . . MACMILLAN & COMPANY, LTD.
MACMILLAN BUILDING, BOMBAY
309 BOW BAZAAR STREET, CALCUTTA

# THE SOCIOLOGICAL VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

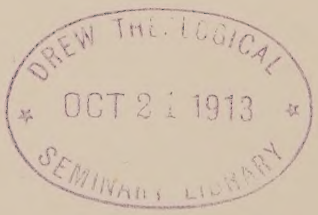
GEORGES CHATTERTON-HILL, PH.D.

DOCENT OF SOCIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA
AUTHOR OF
'HEREDITY AND SELECTION IN SOCIOLOGY'

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1912

REW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY.

301
C495s



IN MEMORIAM

MATRIS CARISSIMAE

PER AETATEM PUERILEM SOCII MEI.

REQUIEM SEMPITERNAM HABEAT.

123801

# PREFACE

To attempt, at the present time of day, to defend a religious system from a dogmatic point of view, appears a very thankless task. Such is by no means the object of the present book. The epoch of sterile controversies between the theologians of antagonistic creeds has been brought to a close, and the great mass of educated people are perfectly convinced of the absolute uselessness of all discussion concerning so-called "dogmatic truths." The reason for the general indifference towards the intestine quarrels and wrangling between the various sections of Christianity, is to be found in the fact that humanity, in that it has increased in knowledge, has increased likewise in wisdom. Wisely has humanity recognised the inanity of quarrels regarding questions which no mortal being can hope to solve, which lie beyond the field of vision and the reach of criticism. Wisely has it come to admit that all beliefs of a suprarational (*i.e.* religious) nature, are equally legitimate—seeing that they are, all of them, equally unprovable. Controversies concerning the great Unknowable which is at the basis of all religions, reduce themselves to mere empty and senseless verbiage; for the controversialists are discussing the truth of things that lie by definition outside the sphere of human knowledge, and of which all controversialists must of needs be equally ignorant. The wisdom of theologians, as Goethe well said,

> Bleibt stets am gleichen Schlag,
> Und ist so wunderlich als wie am ersten Tag.

We of the twentieth century know not one iota more about the so-called "fundamental truths of religion," than those of the first Christian century did; we stand to-day before the same unsolved riddles as did our Aryan ancestors of the Veda, who invoked Varuna, Usha, Savitri, the Asuras, with the same legitimate degree of confidence and certainty as Christians of the twentieth century invoke the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; exactly the same amount of theological truth was expressed in the daily Vedic sacrifice to Agni, as is expressed in the daily Christian sacrifice of the Mass. *Der Wahrheit letzter Schluss*, the last word of truth, to use the expression of Faust, was spoken by the worshippers of Isis at Thebes and Memphis, when, on the veil that concealed the face of the goddess to mortal eyes, they inscribed the sentence: "No mortal is able to raise my veil."

The esoteric worshippers of Isis used to impose on all new adepts an *épreuve de foi* on entering the association of the faithful; they had to walk without trembling along the brink of an abyss, the depths of which were shrouded in darkness. This abyss, unfathomable to the eye of him who peered into it from above, symbolised the *Unfathomable Truth.* The abyss of truth remains as unfathomable to-day as it was unfathomable then; neither the blood of innumerable martyrs, nor the learned and persevering efforts of scientists and philosophers, have succeeded in lighting up the sombre recesses of the precipice. The great enigma of Life and Death has not been solved; none of those who have set sail on the great Ocean of Eternity have ever returned to "give us a sign." We still stand on the shores of the Ocean of Mystery, and wait for a sign, until our turn comes; and we have to embark on the journey from which there is no return, without ever having received the sign. The seven Genii of the Vision of Hermes, the seven Devas of India, the seven Amsphapands of Persia, the seven Angels of Chaldea, the seven Sephiroths of the

Kabal, the seven Archangels of the Christian Apocalypse: none of these have given us the sign whereby we may comprehend the riddle of Life and Death.

Doubtless will Christian apologists reply that there where all other religions have failed, the religion of Jesus has succeeded—that the resurrection of Jesus has opened unto us the gates that bar the threshold of the Mystery. For the believer this is incontestably true; but it is a subjective truth, a truth that can be grasped only after the preliminary accomplishment of an act of faith. The keynote of the Christian religion, as of all religions, is to be found in the word *credo*: the Christian believer, like all other believers, *believes* certain things to be true. But these things lie outside the domain of experience; by scientific methods they are unprovable; and they remain accessible solely to the subjective vision engendered by faith. This is the reason why the application of scientific methods to the study of the origins of the Christian religion, has yielded results so meagre by comparison with the amount of labour and energy spent on the task. The believer, he who repeats with the fervour of intense conviction: *Credo et confiteor*, cares not one straw for the results of learned researches concerning the probable authorship of the Synoptics, or the date of the fourth gospel. What matters it to him if, as M. Alfred Loisy maintains, the gospels be "hypothetical, vague, legendary, partial"—or if, as M. Loisy further maintains, "at the time when the ecclesiastical organisation was anxious to arrest the flowing tide of the Gnostic heresy by means of the Gospels, one possessed nevertheless only the most shadowy information concerning the origin of the latter"?[1] The application of the methods of scientific research, so fruitful in the domain of experience, to the elucidation of questions of faith—has, as we said, yielded but meagre results, as far as the sapping of the strength of the Christian organisation is concerned. The

[1] A. Loisy, *Simples Réflexions* (1908), p. 127.

believer's belief is an essentially subjective phenomenon; being such, the undermining of the objective historical basis of the Church leaves it wholly undisturbed. Faith appeals to the sentiment, science to the reason. The believer will not seek to *reason his faith*—for this would either have no meaning at all, or else it would signify the destruction of faith. The believer clings with tenacity to his faith, no arguments will shake the latter, because it responds to the deepest emotional needs of human nature.

The theological criterion of religious truth remains an essentially subjective one: the consolations offered by Christianity are true for him who has an intense need of them. Embedded in the innermost recesses of the individual conscience, the glorious vision of the Divine Master will not be extinguished by methods that cannot be applied in this domain, where the individual emotion, the individual sentiment, are all-powerful. But this purely subjective justification of Christianity—is it sufficient? And does it explain at all adequately the triumph of the Church over pagan syncretism in the first Christian centuries, and the survival of the Church up to the present day? The reply must in each case be negative. Christianity must be able to justify itself on objective grounds, it must be able to encounter the criticisms of science in the domain of concrete facts, it must be able to demonstrate the advantages derived by humanity from it irrespective of its subjective workings in the recesses of the individual conscience. It must be able to vindicate the claim to be an indispensable factor in *social* evolution—to be an instrument of the positive and concrete utility for society. Christianity, in other words, must not merely be able to shelter itself from the criticisms and attacks of its adversaries by retreating into the inner conscience of the individual, by concealing itself in a subjective domain into which scientific criticism cannot penetrate; it must be able to oppose to

scientific criticism, which deals exclusively with objective and concrete facts, other facts of a like tangible nature.

But in order to do this, as we have said, Christianity must not retreat into the individual conscience, must not reduce itself to a mere medicine, a mere "inner light," for the individual soul. It must rise above the individual, its light must shine without unto the world, it must be something more than a vague "interior music," to speak like Schleiermacher. Over and above the ephemeral individual conscience, with its purely subjective wants and emotions, there is society—which is permanent, whose needs are universal. The permanent and the universal—such must be the basis of Christianity, and not the ephemeral and the subjective. And the very fact of its survival, of its triumph over pagan syncretism in the early centuries of its existence, proves that the religion of Jesus possesses a principle, is built up on a principle, that is of a permanent and universal nature. Were this religion a mere medicine for the individual soul, a mere "inner light" for the individual conscience, then could we have no possible guarantee of its perennity, no adequate explanation either of its persistence or of its universality. At the most, in this case, could we reasonably expect it to have survived the first two Christian generations, that is to say, so long as the personal influence of the Master was still a living force. To suppose that a philosophy built up on so unstable and ephemeral a basis could have survived the storms of twenty centuries, is to suppose human history to be one long miracle. If Christianity has survived these storms, it can only be because Christianity is built up on principles that respond to permanent and universal needs of Western Society.

"La morale chrétienne, . . ." says M. Salomon Reinach, ". . . n'est pas *sociale*, elle néglige les devoirs de l'homme envers la cité, parce qu'elle tend à la perfection, à la pureté individuelle; mais elle prépare l'homme à mieux remplir ses

devoirs sociaux en condamnant la haine et la violence, en enseignant la fraternité."[1] We have taken, in the present book, a diametrically opposite view of Christianity, to that taken by M. Salomon Reinach; and we have endeavoured to show that the strength of Christianity, the secret of its survival amidst the storms of centuries, are to be sought precisely in the fact that the doctrine of Jesus *is a social doctrine*, a doctrine that inculcates rules of social life that are indispensable to the persistence of Western civilisation. Here have we the objective criterion whereby to judge the merits of Christianity—here have we the objective justification of the latter, that is to say, a justification far removed from the variegated and unstable wants of heterogeneous individual consciences. Too long have men quarrelled about questions that none can solve, because the solution lies beyond the sphere of human knowledge; too much valuable time, too much valuable energy have been wasted on hairsplitting concerning dogmas, the truth of which can never be objectively proved, and which can be grasped only as the result of an act of individual faith. The world has grown indifferent to such hairsplitting, which has not advanced our knowledge of the Unknown and Unknowable one step beyond that of our ancestors many thousand years back.

It is not in themselves that the doctrines of any religious system can be judged—for, as we said, they concern matters that lie outside the sphere of human knowledge, they are not susceptible of being objectively proved, and each individual conscience must be left to appreciate them according to its own particular light. It is according to their *objective consequences for society* that all religious doctrines must be judged —according to the only criterion whereby we are able to judge them, whereby we are able to appreciate their value, that is to say, the degree of objective truth which such doctrines

[1] S. Reinach, *Orpheus: histoire générale des religions*, pp. 341, 342.

may contain. The sociological study of religions has begun to open unto our vision a new aspect of religious belief, has begun to show us in religious belief something more than a mere individual yearning after hidden truths; it has begun to show us in such belief a fundamental and permanent factor of social existence and evolution. Instead of seeking, as theology does, to justify or to condemn a religious system by an appeal to evidence that can never be proved—or that can be regarded as "proved" only as far as the individual conscience is concerned, which latter believes or disbelieves the evidence according to its wholly subjective tendencies and wants; sociology justifies or condemns a religious system by an appeal to the concrete results obtained, in the life of society, by the working and influence of such a system.

And such, we repeat, is the only criterion that we possess whereby to judge the value of a system of religious beliefs. When it does not exercise itself on questions of which we can know nothing, our judgment becomes more tolerant because based on certainties. As long as we discuss unprovable hypotheses, our fanaticism is excited, because no objective criterion of truth exists, according to which we may control our assertions and limit, in consequence, the violence of our passions. How much poignant suffering was caused, what rivers of blood were shed, on account of differences of opinion concerning the possibility of transubstantiation, concerning the definition of the sacrifice of the Mass, concerning other equally insoluble theological problems! If humanity has grown more tolerant to-day, this is due to the fact that we have come gradually to recognise the insoluble nature of such problems—that we have come to substitute an objective criterion of religious truth for the former subjective one. There is no need to burn or to hang the "heretic" to-day; we can convince him of heresy by a simple appeal to facts—and, if he be intelligent and of good faith, he will not seek to

contest facts. *The substitution of provable facts for unprovable hypotheses as the criterion of religious truth*—such has been the appreciable result already obtained by the sociological study of religions. We henceforth see in every religious system that has survived in the universal struggle for existence, a fundamental factor in the life of that society to which such a system belongs. Every religious system that survives is adapted to the necessities of the society in which it survives. Such a religious system is therefore *true* in the only sense in which truth can be proved—in the sense that it responds to the end in view of which it was evolved. Truth is necessarily a relative conception; and the truth of a religious system can be judged of only with reference to a given environment. In this environment the system is true (or untrue), and its truth (or untruth) can be proved by the concrete results of its influence on social life. Christianity is true for the Western world; Islam, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, are true in their respective environments. Each responds to the peculiar needs of heterogeneous social aggregates.

As to the theological truth of the doctrines of all these religions—and of all the others—it must be left to the individual believer to decide. The criterion of theological truth is a subjective one, and each must say for himself, in the measure in which he is capable: *Credo et confiteor.* Theological truths cannot be criticised, for they lie outside the domain of criticism. But their justification is likewise a matter for the individual conscience, and for the individual conscience alone.

The words pronounced by the greatest of modern scientists, Louis Pasteur, on the occasion of his solemn reception by the Académie française, remain eternally true, in the past, in the present, and for all future times. By their quotation we will close:—

*La notion de l'Infini a ce double caractère de s'imposer et*

*d'être incompréhensible. Quand cette notion s'empare de l'entendement, il n'y a qu'à se prosterner. Encore, à ce moment de poignantes angoisses, il faut demander grâce à sa raison : tous les ressorts de la vie intellectuelle menacent de se détendre ; on se sent près d'être saisi par la sublime folie de Pascal. Cette notion positive et primordiale, le positivisme l'écarte gratuitement, elle et toutes ses conséquences dans la vie des sociétés.*

*La notion de l'Infini dans le monde, j'en vois partout l'inévitable expression. Par elle, le surnaturel est au fond de tous les cœurs. L'idée de Dieu est une forme de l'idée de l'Infini. Tant que le mystère de l'Infini pèsera sur la pensée humaine, des temples seront élevés du culte de l'Infini, que le Dieu s'appelle Brahma, Allah, Jehova ou Jésus. Et sur la dalle de ces temples vous verrez des hommes agenouillés, prosternés, abîmés dans la pensée de l'Infini. La métaphysique ne fait que traduire au dedans de nous la notion dominatrice de l'Infini. La conception de l'idéal n'est-elle pas encore la faculté, reflet de l'Infini, qui, en présence de la beauté, nous porte à imaginer une beauté supérieure ? La science et la passion de comprendre, sont-elles autre chose que l'effet de l'aiguillon du savoir que met en notre âme le mystère de l'Univers ? Où sont les vraies sources de la dignité humaine, de la liberté et de la démocratie moderne, sinon dans la notion de l'Infini devant laquelle tous les hommes sont égaux ?*

Thus spoke the greatest of modern scientists, if by "great" we mean him who has been humanity's greatest benefactor—thus spoke the man whose discoveries have revolutionised all our conceptions of disease and its treatment, and who has done more than any man of his generation to diminish human misery and to alleviate human suffering. The speech of Pasteur to the Académie française reminds us of the profound words of Goethe, to the effect that "wir still verehren dürfen, was unerforschlich ist." In the common veneration of a lofty ideal, in a common humility before the great Mystery of the Infinite,

men of all creeds can unite, remembering that, as the Apostle said, *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate*—remembering that, in consequence, the rule of our conduct in relation to the beliefs of our fellow-men should invariably be: *In omnibus caritas.* Abandoning all vain controversy concerning beliefs that are *theologically* identical at the bottom, it should be the aim of all to endeavour to realise, as far as possible, the inexhaustible social genius of Christianity, to draw from the fountain of the Gospel that "social wisdom" which flows from it in such a crystal stream.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS . . . . . Pp. 1-21

Position to be adopted by the sociologist with regard to the problem of the authenticity of the Gospels.—Sociology has no concern with theological or exegetical questions.—Misunderstanding of the purport of the teaching of Jesus alike by admirers and detractors.—The teaching of Jesus is not destined primarily for the individual, but for society.—Influence of Christianity on the evolution of Western civilisation.—Social importance of religion in general.—Incomprehensibility of religious beliefs when viewed from an individual standpoint.—Primitive practices and customs, the *rites de passage*, marriage regulations of totemic groups.—Collective origin and nature of religious beliefs.—Religion is the primordial phenomenon of social life.—The social necessities which engendered religion, the social needs to which the latter responds.—Only in its later forms does religion take any account of the individual.—Place *sui generis* occupied in this respect, in the evolution of religious beliefs, by Christianity.—Christianity realises an equilibrium between social and individual interests.—Adaptation of Christianity to the double series of antagonistic necessities (social and individual).

## CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND SOCIETY . . . . . Pp. 22-50

I. Primitive undifferentiated condition of individual thought, which confounds itself with collective thought.—Progressive diminution of the "sphere of influence" of the collective representations: formation of rational concepts.—Social function of rationalism: adaptation of society to environing conditions with less expenditure of social force.—Necessity of the limitation of rationalism.—Differentiation of the terms religion-society, individual-society.—The ethical religions *limit rationalism and adapt the latter to its social function*.—By means of the limitation of rationalism, religion *establishes an equilibrium between society and the individual*.—This equilibrium is realised by means of the notion of Duty.—The sacrifice of egotistical interests and the idea of compensation.—The correlative notions of Duty and Compensation in Christian ethics.

II. Social growth entails the formation of differentiated social subdivisions.—In a disintegrated society, such subdivisions are no longer adapted to the fulfilment of their primary function, which is that of organising and

co-ordinating the divers individual activities in the interest of the whole aggregate.—In that it secures an equilibrium between society and the individual, religion also *secures an equilibrium between the social subdivisions and the whole aggregate.*—Class interests and social interests.—Difficulty of curbing class egotism.—Religion *secures social integration.*—The four social functions of religion are in reality varied aspects of the primordial function of securing social integration.—The Moral Law and the social law.

III. Absence of ethical conceptions in primitive societies.—Development of the Moral Law is correlative of the development of rationalism.—Differentiation of religion and society, whereby the former is rendered capable of controlling that part of human conduct which, as a result of the development of rationalism, henceforth escapes the control of the social law.—The emancipation of the "rationalised personality" of the individual from social control must needs have the development of an Absolute Moral Law, *i.e.* the extension of the sphere of religion beyond the limits of society, as corollary.—Plasticity and adaptability of the religious structure.—Rationalism and the Moral Law.—The Protestant doctrine of subjectivism.—Morals, like religion, are a social creation, responding to social necessities.—The value of a religious system can be judged only from the standpoint of the interests of society.

## CHAPTER III

THE THEORY AND THE PRACTICE OF CHRISTIANITY . Pp. 51-67

Impossibility, for the sociologist, of distinguishing between theory and practice in Christianity.—The theories formulated in the Gospels cannot be appreciated independently of the concrete application of such theories.—The superstition of equality and the attitude of Christianity thereto.—The Jesus of Tolstoi.—Disconcerting assumptions of the theory which seeks to place the teaching of Jesus in antagonism to the historical development of Christian doctrine and practice.—Impossibility of supposing Church Christianity to be a falsification of the Christianity of Jesus.—It is equally impossible to suppose the former to be "inferior" to the latter.—Widespread ignorance of the nature and workings of social laws.—The force of ideas.—Origin of the Christian doctrine.—It is legitimate to assume that the early Christians practised the authentic teaching of Jesus.—But it was impossible that the social organisation of the early Christians could reflect the whole social teaching of Jesus.—The Church of the Middle Ages was the successor of the primitive Church, whose task it continued and developed.

## CHAPTER IV

FRATERNITY *VERSUS* EQUALITY . . . . Pp. 68-107

I. The notion of equality is based on egotism.—Egotistical nature of Socialism.—Psychology of the masses.—Psychology of the representatives of intellect.—The doctrine of equality implies the correlative notion of the superiority of those who aspire after equality.—The "dictature of the proletariat" and the "dictature of intellect."

II. The psychological basis of equality and the psychological basis of fraternity.—The Christian doctrine of fraternity applies to all classes of society.—

Fraternity implies the necessity of humility. — It acts, therefore, with peculiar force as a curb on the egotism of the governing classes. —Insufficiency of the social policy of the *bourgeoisie*.—Demoralising effects of *bourgeois* egotism and materialism. — Destruction of social cohesion and solidarity.—The anarchy of individualism.—The agony of *bourgeois* society.

III. Three underlying conditions implied by the doctrine of fraternity: social integration, recognition of human dignity, individual humility.—These fundamental conditions were realised by Christianity.—Necessity of distinguishing between the Absolute or Moral and the Relative or Social.—Error of Tolstoyism.—Jesus accepted the social law, but over and above it he placed the Moral Law.—Differentiation of the two laws equivalent to the differentiation of the Absolute and the Relative.—The Moral Law at once completes and reinforces the social law.—The two laws are fundamentally different in their nature, because they appertain to two fundamentally different worlds.—Jesus admitted the inequalities of the relative World.—In Christian ethics, Duty is the indispensable counterpart of Inequality.—Duty and responsibility increase in the same measure as capacity and power.—Synthetic nature of the message of fraternity.—The latter inculcates to each social class its duties.—Fraternity is based on the idea of the fundamental identity of the duties, the moral value, and the insufficiency, of all classes.—Necessity of humility and the example of Jesus.

## CHAPTER V

The Supreme Dignity of Labour . . . Pp. 108-120

Immense quantity of suffering entailed by social evolution. — This suffering is enhanced if social solidarity does not exist.—The supreme dignity of labour consecrated by Christianity.—Equality of the various categories of labour before the Moral Law.—Responsibility increases with capacity. —Parable of the labourers in the vineyard.—Social inequality is measured by inequality of capacity.—The Moral Law does not take account of capacity, but of the will underlying each individual capacity.—Labour must always be proportioned to the individual patrimony.—The notion of pride in Christian ethics.—Those to whom little has been given, must also work.—The Christian idea of compensation.

## CHAPTER VI

Marriage and Family Life . . . . Pp. 121-149

I. The family is a miniature society.—The family as a religious institution.—The teaching of Jesus regarding marriage.—Difficulty of applying regulations affecting the sexual life of the individual.—Sexual legislation of the Catholic Church.—Hatred of restraints on sexual intercourse was the chief factor at work in the anti-Catholic movement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and is the principal lever of the modern revolutionary movement.—In Christian ethics, husband and wife are unequal before the social law, and equal before the Moral Law.—As in society in general, so also in the family, the notion of inequality is tempered by the ideas of Duty and Responsibility.—Duties of parents towards their children.

II. The integration of society depends on the integration of the family.—

Difference between the family and other subdivisions of society.—Degeneracy of contemporary ideas regarding marriage.—Undermining of family life by egotism.—Dangers of divorce.—Deplorable biological and moral consequences of a miscomprehension of the meaning of marriage.—Immense social value of the Catholic conception of marriage.—The doctrine of Ibsen, as preached in *The Doll's House*.—Perniciousness of this doctrine for society.—Even as Christianity realises a synthesis between the various classes, so does it also realise a synthesis between the various members of the family.—The anti-egotistical teaching of Christianity is applicable alike to the whole society and to the family.—The Catholic teaching of the family as a school of discipline.—The attitude of Catholicism and Protestantism towards the sexual life of the individual.

## CHAPTER VII

Struggle and Suffering . . . . Pp. 150-183

Preliminary :—Human history is one long record of struggle and suffering.—Progress of the species conditioned by individual suffering.—Rationalism tends to create an antinomy between natural law and the individual.—Mysterious nature of the process of organic evolution.—Extermination of inferior forms of life is an universal law only within the limits of the species.—In how far rationalism can favour individual interests without imperilling social interests.

I. The utility of rationalism for society.—Development and preservation of eugenic elements.—Religion is never humanitarian.—Attitude of Jesus towards the question of individual happiness.—The message of the Cross.—Individual salvation is made by Christianity to depend on the very conditions on which depends social salvation.—Christianity combats egotism by an appeal to egotism.—Christianity is neither equalitarian nor humanitarian.—The notion of duty as conceived by the social law and by the divine law.—Christian ethics give a value to individual life, and so induce the individual to sacrifice himself to social ends.—Christianity is pre-eminently an organ of social defence and social integration.

II. Humanitarianism is an aspect of egotism.—Jesus on the necessity and desirableness of suffering.—Humanitarianism is not a consequence of the Christian doctrine of fraternity.—Fraternity is based on the idea of Duty.—The primordial duty of the individual is to conform his conduct to the interests of the collectivity.—The interests of the collectivity demand the elimination of inferior elements.—The teaching of Jesus and St. Paul in this respect.—The parable of the talents.—Jesus condemns parasitism.—Fundamental difference between even the humblest work and parasitism.—Misuse of the word pity.—The great lesson of Calvary.—It is our duty to aid those who are worthy.—Christianity teaches that we are judged according to our actions.

## CHAPTER VIII

Christianity and Rationalism . . . Pp. 184-207

I. Christianity a fundamental factor of Western civilisation.—In Christian ethics, compensation and consolation are conditioned by duty and suffering.—If the notion of duty is to be efficacious, the individual must

be strongly integrated in society.—Christianity guarantees the perpetuity of individual effort and sacrifice.—In Christian ethics, observance of the social law is required as part of the individual's duty towards the Moral Law.

II. Widespread underestimation of the social importance of Christianity.—Auguste Comte and the positivist school.—Misconception of the nature of Christianity.—Pernicious consequences of a unilateral development of rationalism.—Insufficiency of purely analytical reasoning.—Analysis must be completed by synthesis.—The disappearance of Christianity would signify the suppression of all efficient restraints on egotism.—The continuity of Christianity is assured by the synthetic nature of the latter.—Life itself contains no principle capable of conferring an adequate value on life.—Rationalism can bring about a temporary cessation of social conflict; but this would imply the ultimate elimination of the social group.—Reason can confer no sufficient sanction on suffering.—In the interests of society and of the individual, rationalism must be completed by supra-rational principles.—Christianity safeguards both series of interests.—Christian idealism.—Rationalism creates a permanent contradiction between the self-conscious individual and his environment.—Christianity does not seek to suppress suffering, but it gives suffering a meaning.—Christianity resolves the problem of how to enforce natural and social laws, whilst at the same time safeguarding individual interests.—Nihilism the only possible result of excessive rationalism.

III. A rational society has greater need of supra-rational and ethical beliefs than a pre-rational society in which individuality is wholly undeveloped.—Rationalism is the force that impels humanity to have recourse to ethical religious belief.

## CHAPTER IX

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY . . . . Pp. 208-258

PRELIMINARY:—We can now understand better the nature of the two antagonistic forces of human evolution: religion and rationalism.—The "artificial idealism" of the Greeks.—Art cannot, as a general rule, be substituted for religion.—The reason of the persistence of Christian beliefs.

I. Two parallel series of movements constitute the history of Western society since the end of the fourteenth century.—The reactions against rationalism.—Excessive rationalism creates moral instability and anarchy.—But an essential condition of happiness is order and regularity.—Necessity of Christianity for Western civilisation.—But Christianity is not a homogeneous mass.—Individualist and undogmatic forms of Christianity do not respond to the needs of Western society.—Inferiority, in this respect, of Protestantism.—Reason is powerless to exert an inhibitory influence on the promptings of egotism and on the impulsions of instinct.—The effects of egotism in social life are never indifferent.—Necessity of preventing social disintegration.

II. Notion of Duty reduced by Protestantism to its lowest possible *minimum*.—Suppression of the priesthood implies the abolition of all efficacious moral authority over the individual.—Illusory nature of the discipline imposed by Protestantism.—The life of the Protestant is an essentially free one.—The *terminus* of Protestant evolution is self-destruction.—Protestant sects.—Denial by contemporary Protestant theology of the fundamental Christian doctrines.—The Yatho case at Cologne.—Protestantism fails to satisfy the deeper aspirations of the individual soul.—The quantitative and qualitative limitation of public worship.—

Exclusion of Protestantism from participation in the future evolution of Western society.—Patriotism as a social force.—Conditions under which patriotism can secure adequate social integration. The example of Germany.—The United States.—Necessity, for the United States, of a strong integrating force.

III. Exclusively critical nature of Protestantism.—Soundness of the social principles of the Catholic Church: hierarchy without heredity; separation of the moral and political.—The institution of ecclesiastical celibacy and its social purport.—Necessity of separating the moral and the political spheres.—Danger of State control over the Church.—Struggle between State and Church during the Middle Ages.—The accomplishment of the sociological task of the Church was conditioned by the maintenance of the latter's independence.—Social idealism is based on the fundamental distinction between the moral and the political powers.—Noxious results of the confusion of these two powers.—The combination of aristocratism and democracy in the Catholic system.—The error of aristocracies.—Heredity alone does not ensure fitness, or adaptation of capacity to function.—Danger of the caste.—If we admit that the bourgeois *régime* secures, in contemporary society, the adaptations of capacity to function; nevertheless it fails to provide the notion of authority with an adequate basis.—Anarchical condition of the French democracy.—Symptoms of social disintegration in Germany and Great Britain.—The Catholic organisation adequately safeguards authority.—It likewise affords free play to the action of selection.

IV. Catholicism at once safeguards social interests and ministers to individual wants.—Remarkable capacity of survival of the Catholic Church.—Failure of all attempts to create a schism.—Integrating power of the Church proved by the acceptance of the infallibility dogma.—Sociological justification of papal infallibility.—The future policy of Western society must be based on the great social principles of the Catholic Church.—But this does not imply the possibility of a re-establishment of dogmatic unity.

## CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS . . . . . Pp. 259-285

Summary of the main ideas developed in this book.—Collective nature of religion and morals.—Incomprehensibility of both from the standpoint of the individual.—Christianity, like all other religions, is an instrument of social defence and integration.—The debt of the Western world to Christianity.—The social value of Christianity is not ephemeral, but permanent.—Vital importance of heredity, whether biological or moral, in social life.—Christianity constitutes the hereditary moral patrimony of Western society.—Disquieting symptoms in contemporary civilisation.—The disease of anarchy.—Anomalies and contradictions of the bourgeois *régime*.—Solidarity of Western nations produced by increase of intercommunication. The lessons of the past.—History shows us how the problem of disciplining society can be solved.—Untoward effects of the diminution of Christian influence in modern times.—Evil consequences of too sudden and too prolonged prosperity.—The future prospects of Western society.

# THE SOCIOLOGICAL VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

It is not without interest, in this twentieth century which, we are told, shall witness the definite destruction of all the old faiths that have consoled humanity during two thousand years —it is not without interest, at such a time, to examine the question of the sociological value of Christianity. We have neither the desire nor the authority to examine the problem of the authenticity of the Christian Gospels. That is a matter for theological experts, and we have not the slightest claim to any sort of authority in matters theological. We assume therefore, in order to simplify the debate, that the gospels are authentic, that is to say, that they do really contain, or at any rate reflect, the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth as propounded to his disciples and to those who heard him teach, or as further propagated by those who gathered the purport of his teaching from those who heard him teach. We have here to do purely and simply with the man Jesus; we neither affirm nor deny his divine character. In like manner we have to do purely and simply with the four gospels and the epistles as they are given us in the version accepted by the Church; we neither affirm nor deny the authenticity of these writings, we leave

entirely aside the question of their divine inspiration. We approach the New Testament in the same manner as a man of science approaches any other work. We desire to judge Christ as a sociologist, to see whether the teaching of Christ is of any value to us in the twentieth century from a sociological point of view, to see whether the social evolution of two thousand years has left anything standing of the social teaching of Jesus, to see, in fact, whether Jesus did in reality teach anything of social import, whether indeed he took the facts of our social existence into consideration—or whether he was only a spiritual guide, a moral comforter, perhaps a misguided mystic visionary.

The general feeling with regard to the gospels is that the latter constitute a collection of exclusively moral precepts, the application of which is peculiarly useful in times of individual moral distress. In other words, the teaching of Christ has the individual as its aim, the entire doctrine of moral regeneration has the individual as starting-point, basis, and centre. If Christ's teaching has any social value, it can only be the effect of a repercussion of individual interests on the society at large: the amelioration of social conditions is regarded as a consequence of an amelioration of the individual conscience and character. Christ came to educate the individual, to instruct and to comfort the individual, to show the individual the path that leads to a better life. If this view be correct, it is clear that Christ cannot be regarded as a sociologist, the gospels cannot be considered as affording a basis for sociological reorganisation and reconstruction. It may be admitted that Christ was not wholly regardless of social laws, that his work can likewise be appreciated as that of a social reformer; yet only indirectly. The main object of his mission was the redemption of the individual, the preaching of the doctrine of individual salvation, the winning of the individual soul. Christ's desire was to conduct the individual along the road

which leads to the gate of eternal life, along the road of righteousness. And righteousness is understood as implying in the main the duty towards God, individual conduct is directed with a view to placing the individual on satisfactory terms with his creator. The duty towards the neighbour, which is the fundament of social relations, is secondary, and is derived from the duty towards God, from the necessity of winning God's favour in order to obtain eternal life. Thus is the altruism which presides over the social duties a mere consequence of the egoistical desire of divine reward for obedience to divine commands.

And those who contest the value of the moral teaching of Christ, who consider that the advent of Christianity indicated a regression of the onward movement of civilisation, that the introduction of Christianity signified the clogging of the wheels of progress, the death-blow to the magnificent antique ideals of force and beauty—those also consider exclusively the teaching of Christ as applicable to the individual. "Der Gott am Kreuz ist ein Fluch auf das Leben," exclaimed Nietzsche, "ein Fingerzeig, sich von ihm zu entfernen."[1] But why is the Nazarene a blight on life? Because he turned the channel of the individual's thoughts towards a spiritual existence, because he made the restriction of individual wants and desires a condition *sine qua non* of the attainment of this spiritual existence, because he made the individual an end unto himself, because he centred the thoughts and the activities of the individual on the individual, because henceforth the individual, in obedience to Christ's teaching, abandoned his rights and liberties in order to consecrate himself to the task of self-perfection, because the intellectual activity of the individual was henceforth restricted to the searching after personal amelioration, because the individual

[1] "The crucified God is a curse and a blight on life, a warning to flee from all existence."

life was made to revolve around the axis of individual salvation, which latter can only be obtained by means of moral and physical castration. Those who see in the Greek ideal of life the quintessence of moral beauty, anathematise Christianity because Christianity is the antithesis of the Greek ideal. They admire the Greek ideal for the liberty permitted to the individual, for the scope afforded for the satisfaction of individual desires; and they hate Christianity for the restrictions brought by it to bear on individual liberty. They do not put the question as to whether the restrictions thus imposed by Christianity have any social import, any consequences for the shaping of social conduct and the social relations.

It appears, however, to us, that those who regard the Christian gospel as containing solely a doctrine of individual salvation, who consider the teaching of Christ as a mere balm for individual sorrow or as being exclusively a guide for individual conduct, belittle strangely the value of the New Testament. True, Christ did indeed bring a message of individual consolation, he did indeed show the road that leads to individual salvation, he did indeed insist on the sacred duty of ministering to the needs of the individual soul; but the message of Christ was not restricted to the individual, it rang out, far beyond the limits of the individual, throughout the length and breadth of society. Those who see in Christ a mere preacher of individual regeneration and salvation, who see in religion a mere individual phenomenon, a mere expression of individual emotions, of individual psychological needs, are greatly mistaken. The mission of Christ was not restricted to the individual, the duty of the Christian Church is not restricted to saving the individual soul, the value of religion lies not only in the fact that it voices individual emotions and needs. The mission of Christ was also a sociological mission, the duty of the Church resides also in the ensuring of social cohesion and integration, the value of

religion is equally to be sought in the fact that, through the influence of religious institutions, social conditions prevail that are indispensable to the continuity of social existence.

Is it not, in truth, extraordinary—the affirmation we so often meet with to the effect that the influence of Christianity on the evolution of Western civilisation has been practically null? A vast institution like the Christian Church, which has maintained itself throughout all the changes and chances of twenty centuries, should be the outcome of purely individual needs! An institution which imposes on the individual a number of most inconvenient, not to say galling, restrictions —which limits severely the scope of individual liberty—which prohibits some of the most imperious desires of the individual: this institution is a mere fruit of individual cravings, a mere outlet for individual emotions! Verily can such a conception claim to be founded neither on depth of historical knowledge nor on a logical comprehension of facts. Institutions which have arisen and disappeared again in the course of centuries, after an existence more or less ephemeral—empires, kingdoms, corporations, feudalism with its accompanying institutions of serfdom, vassalage, and villainage, codes of law and territorial divisions—all these, and so many others likewise vanished, are regarded as being sociological factors of importance, as having exerted marked and durable influence on the development of European civilisation, as having numbered among the fundamental developmental forces which have been at work in the shaping of Western society as we know it. And the one institution which has not been ephemeral, the one institution which has victoriously repulsed all the assaults of Time, the one institution which can lay claim to universality—the term being, of course, restricted to the limits of what is known as Western civilisation—this one institution, which is the Christian Church, and more especially the Catholic Church, is not to be reckoned among the social forces which have produced Western

culture, which have preserved the continuity of our social existence! This great permanent and universal institution is to be relegated to the domain of individual psychology! Assuredly are those who hold to this point of view deep neither in history nor in logic.

It is, nevertheless, only quite recently that the sociological importance of religion in general has come to be recognised. The work accomplished by the French school of sociologists, with Professor Durkheim at its head, has been particularly valuable in this respect.[1] The doctrine of Animism, which has found such brilliant exponents in Tylor, Frazer, Hartland, and others, is based upon the fundamental notion of the individual as the centre of all religious phenomena. According to this doctrine, religious belief has as its starting-point the desire of the individual to explain the various phenomena witnessed by him—death, sickness, swoons, sleep, dreams, shadows, and the like. Primitive religious belief is founded on the notion of Analogy, on the notion of the various phenomena in Nature as produced by a life similar to the life of the individual who witnesses such phenomena.[2] Religious beliefs are due to the individual craving for explanation of the world-riddles, and the latter are interpreted in the light of analogy—the same forces are deemed to be at work in Nature at large, as are supposed to be active within the individual. The primitive man reasons according to the same methods and laws of logic as does the civilised man, and the apparently absurd conclusions to which the former comes are merely due to the lack of knowledge, to ignorance of the workings of natural law. Were the civilised man placed in the same conditions, could he divest himself totally of all the knowledge accumulated

[1] See the numerous volumes of *L'Année sociologique*; also Mauss and Hubert, *Mélanges d'histoire des religions* (1908); Lévy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (1910); Chatterton-Hill, "L'Étude sociologique des religions," in *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses* (January-February, 1912).

[2] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 296.

by successive centuries of social evolution, he would not fail to arrive at identical conclusions—for his methods of reasoning remain the same and are invariably dominated by the research after adequate causality. Thus all the religious systems of primitive humanity cannot but appear as grotesque illusions, as ridiculous distortions of what are to us palpable facts. During many thousands of years humanity has laboured under snares and delusions so monstrous as to appear to us inconceivable. And what possible value can all these grotesque beliefs have had, what possible part can they have played in human development? How lamentable a waste of human effort do they represent! The ethnologist and the historian can but marvel at the spectacle of the persistence and diffusion of such absurd superstitions.

Yet when we come to observe the phenomenon attentively, the question must needs arise: How comes it that these grotesque religious systems be so universally diffused? If they be due to mere individual needs, to the individual desire to interpret incomprehensible phenomena, then indeed their diffusion and persistence remain profoundly enigmatical. For if we regard them in this light, they certainly cannot be considered as being of any particular utility to the individual, as tending in any way to further the individual's adaptation to surrounding conditions. Biology teaches us, nevertheless, that the diffusion and persistence of an organ in a species are the sure evidence of the utility of that organ—are the proof of the organ in question being instrumental in ensuring the survival of the species in the struggle for existence: and what holds good, in this case, for the species, holds good for society. The diffusion and persistence of the religious systems prove that the latter are instrumental in ensuring the survival of the societies in which they prevail. But when we come to analyse the beliefs of primitive men, the religious systems of primitive societies, we absolutely fail to see what utility they

can possess from an individual point of view. Lord Avebury very justly observed in his work on primitive civilisation that these primitive religious systems impose a great number of highly inconvenient restrictions on the individual.[1] And if we take any concrete case, such as the religious practices relating to the capture of prey, to the curing of disease, or the various practices of magic and divination, etc., can we find in such practices any benefit accruing to the individual? Even to the primitive man it must after a certain time appear evident that magic incantations and mimicry do not materially assist him to catch his prey, that the treatment of the medicine-man does not relieve pain or cure disease. We might therefore expect him to abandon such incantations and to give up consulting the medicine-man. But he does nothing of the sort. Hence we have the apparent anomaly of the individual deliberately clinging to practices which in no wise further his individual welfare or benefit him in any way as individual.

Let us take some further instances. Let us consider the numerous ceremonies which form, so to speak, an integral part of the life of each individual in primitive societies and which M. Van Gennep has so aptly termed *rites de passage*.[2] At any given moment of his existence, the individual finds himself "catalogued" in a certain "life-compartment," and in order to quit this compartment and enter another, he must go through a certain number of strictly defined ceremonies having for their object to separate him completely from his former compartment, and to introduce him as effectively as possible into the new compartment. Thus, when the individual passes from childhood to puberty, from the state of celibacy to the state of marriage, from the profane to the sacred world; when he is definitely received into the totem or into the tribe or into a given profession; when he passes into

[1] Lubbock, *The Origins of Civilisation*, p. 301.
[2] A. Van Gennep, *Les Rites de passage* (1909).

the new lunar month, into the new season; when he passes over the threshold of the house or of the town; when the woman becomes pregnant or accouches:—in all such cases the child, the man, or the woman have to submit to a certain number of strictly-defined ceremonies. Is it possible to explain these ceremonies, and the beliefs which give rise to them, in the terms of individual psychology — to interpret them as based on individual wants and necessities? Can we suppose the individual as such to derive any profit from them? The reply must clearly be in the negative. The numerous ceremonies to which the prevailing religious beliefs require the individual to submit in all the varying phases of his existence, cannot but be terribly burdensome to the individual. Evidently, therefore, these ceremonies and the beliefs underlying them cannot emanate from the individual; they must inevitably derive from a power superior to the individual.

Let us take again another instance: the marriage regulations in the totemic societies of Australia. The complication of these regulations, the object of which is to prevent totemic endogamy, is truly extraordinary. How can it be supposed that these regulations, which so severely prohibit sexual union between members of the same totem, are a mere expression of individual needs? To explain them as due to an instinctive fear of the dangers of consanguinity is quite out of the question. In the first place, consanguinity *per se* is not dangerous from a biological point of view; it only becomes dangerous when the parents are diseased. In the second place, to suppose the aborigines of Central Australia avoiding consanguinous unions from fear of the possible consequences of such unions, is to suppose them possessed of considerably greater foresight and considerably greater biological knowledge than the civilised societies of Western Europe. In the third place, the marriage regulations of the Australian tribes are complicated to the extent of pre-

venting marriages even between persons brought-up together on the same territory—consequently between persons linked by no physiological ties. Considered from an individual point of view, all these regulations cannot but prove irksome in the extreme. How then are we to explain them as based on individual wants and necessities? Evidently the beliefs on which such complicated and irksome regulations are founded do not emanate from the individual but are derived from social necessities, as Professor Durkheim pointed out in his admirable and lucid essay on the *Origins of the Prohibition of Incest.*[1] In other words, these beliefs, which are incomprehensible when viewed in the light of individual psychology, can only be interpreted in the light of social psychology.

And when we see the extraordinary force with which the primitive man's beliefs act on him; when we see these beliefs capable of radically preventing the satisfaction of the strongest individual instincts; when we see them imposing themselves on the individual in spite of manifest ocular evidence of their absurdity; when we see them producing, as in the case of the magician, swoons and delirium, and inspiring, in all cases, inexpressible fear and sentiments of veneration and awe of which we can have but a faint conception; when we see all this, it must appear clear to us that the origin of such beliefs is not to be sought in the individual intellect, in the calm contemplation of environing phenomena, in the wish to explain the mysteries of Nature. Is it at all likely that primitive men should have felt a desire to interpret Nature so imperious, that they were willing to subordinate their entire existence to this interpretation? No reasoned belief, engendered by the mere working of the intellect, is capable of producing the violent emotions which

[1] Durkheim, "La Prohibition de l'inceste et ses origines," in *L'Année sociologique*, vol. i. pp. 1-70 (1896-97).

the beliefs of primitive man invariably inspire. Beliefs thus capable of exciting violent emotions, of imposing themselves *a priori* on the individual, of inducing the individual to submit without questioning to the most irksome restraints and restrictions, must necessarily have their origin outside the individual, must needs derive from a power superior to the individual and able to impress unquestioning obedience on the latter. But the only power superior to the individual, within the limits of our experience, is the society. Hence the conclusion that the beliefs which exert so immense an influence on the life of primitive men, are of a social, and not of an individual, nature. Their origin must be sought in social necessities, not in individual necessities. They dominate the individual, because the individual cannot exist outside the society or independently of the society, because the society is able to enforce its will with irresistible force. The individual mind has not invented such beliefs, it has received them from the society, from the social mind. Such beliefs are of a collective nature and, as regards each individual, *a priori*. The collective mentality, the social mind, is not synonymous with the individual mentality, it is not a mere grouping of individual mentalities. The social mind, the collective mentality, is something *sui generis*, which is not subject to the laws that are operative in the domain of individual psychology. It is a force superior to the individual. True, the society is composed of individuals; but the life of society is as independent of the lives of the individuals composing it, as the existence of the individual is independent of that of the cells composing the individual organism. As little as we can interpret the life of a man according to the life of one of the cells composing his organism at any given moment—as little can we interpret the life of society in the light of that of one of its individual components.

The work accomplished by the French school of sociology has enabled us to grasp better three fundamental facts: firstly, that the society is a phenomenon *sui generis,* the evolution of which is independent of the evolution of its individual components; secondly, that religious beliefs and institutions are the product of society, of the workings of the social mind—that they do not emanate from the individual; thirdly, that such religious beliefs and institutions constitute the most fundamental of all the forces underlying the vast process of social evolution We are now in a better position to comprehend the phenomenon, already noticed, of the extraordinary diffusion and persistence of religious beliefs so transparently absurd to our rationally educated minds. For we now see in them a product, not of the individual mind, but of the collective mind; we know society to be independent of the individual, we know that it completely dominates the individual; and we know such beliefs to correspond to imperious social necessities, to be fundamentally operative in the formation of the social life and the social structure. Hence that which, judged as a product of individual psychology and of individual wants, appeared to us wholly inexplicable and absurd, appears now, when we judge it as a product of social psychology and of social wants, in a very different light.

Far, then, from being a mere individual phenomenon, religion appears to us as an essentially social phenomenon, as a product of social life, as a fundamental factor of social development. Religion, as M. Durkheim very justly observes, contains *in potentia* all the various elements which, subsequently dissociated and combined in a thousand ways, give rise to the diverse manifestations of social life. Science and poetry are derived from myths and legends; religious ornamentation and religious ceremonies have given birth to the plastic arts; ritual practices have engendered law and morals; parentage and relationship were originally conceived

as purely mystical links; punishments, contracts, gifts, homage, are but transformations of the doctrine of religious sacrifice; our philosophical conceptions concerning the soul, concerning immortality, concerning life itself, can be understood only by reference to the religious notions that constituted their first form. And the most recent researches, far from confirming the doctrine of historical materialism, show us the economic functions and structure of society as products of religious belief and religious influences. Engendered was religion by the social mind, because it is a factor of social existence, an instrument of social activity and evolution. Its diffusion is universal, because the same necessities, universally prevalent, gave rise to the same organs of social life.

The question now arises: What necessities can have engendered religion, to what social needs does religion respond? The reply is that religion constitutes an indispensable element of social unity, of social cohesion and integration, in that it restrains individual liberty and subordinates the individual to society in the interest of the continuity of social existence. Social existence is possible only if the individual limits his liberty, if he imposes certain restrictions on his desires, if he refrains from committing certain acts which his purely individual interests would prompt him to commit. Obviously the liberty of the individual can be thus limited only by a power superior to him; and the only power superior to him, as we have said, is—within the limits of our experience—society. Society controls the individual by the means of religious belief, by the means of collective representations that impose themselves *a priori* with irresistible force. When metaphysicians talk to us of the reconciliation of individual and social interests, it is necessary to avoid misunderstandings. In reality, individual and social interests are never reconciled; there is always an inevitable antagonism between the two. What really happens is, that individual

interests are sacrificed to social interests. This sacrifice is necessary, if the stability of society, if the continuity of social existence, are to be maintained. But the interests of the individual are incontestably sacrificed to social needs; and the only benefit accruing to the individual out of the transaction, is that by means of this sacrifice he is enabled to lead a diminished and impoverished existence—for outside the society he can lead no existence at all, he cannot survive. The individual has the choice between a diminished existence and no existence at all; if life can in any way be considered a blessing—and we have no possible justification for an affirmative solution of the riddle, for we know nothing of life and we have nothing known to compare it with—then we may perhaps say that the individual's interests are "reconciled" with the interests of society. Only let us not imagine this "reconciliation" as implying that any remarkable benefit accrues thereby for the individual, or as implying that no positive sacrifice of individual interests is entailed thereby.

Religion is therefore *the instrument whereby the sacrifice of individual interests to social needs is obtained.* Only quite secondarily, from the point of view of its conception, and quite subsequently, from the point of view of its historical development, does religion minister to individual needs. First and foremost it is a factor of social existence, a lever of social evolution. It is primarily conceived and commences primarily its functions, as a factor antagonistic to individual interests. Primitive religion, far from being a source of consolation for the individual, is on the contrary a source of perpetual anguish, of never-ceasing impediments, of endless irksome restraints, of incalculable terror and much misery. Even when we rise to higher stages of culture we still find religious belief marked by the same characteristics. We have only to glance at the religious beliefs and practices of the Incas of Peru, of the Aztecs of Mexico, or of the monotheistic Israelites,

in order to judge of the terror inspired by them. We see the individual ruthlessly sacrificed, condemned to appalling tortures and torments, to the most cruel death, in order to appease the gods, in order to satisfy the divine lust of blood. And again, at the spectacle of the unspeakable terror inspired, and the incalculable hardships caused, by these religious beliefs, we may well ask the question: What benefit did the individual derive from them, to what individual needs did they respond? Considered otherwise than as manifestations of what we may term the collective mind, such beliefs must remain utterly incomprehensible.

It is only very late in mental evolution that we see religion beginning to temper severity with mildness, to blend its prohibitions with consolations, to seek not only to curb the individual by fear but to gain him by persuasion, to mingle with the stern commands more tender appeals and advice. The religion of Israel marks a beginning in this direction, the deity of the time of the later prophets appears possessed of more humanitarian sentiments than those attributed to the old relentless Yahveh, whose Ten Commandments represent him as a "jealous god," who visits the sins of the fathers upon the offspring unto the third and fourth generation — commandments still included apparently in the Protestant catechisms, however incompatible some of the expressions contained in them may appear with the Christian doctrine. But the great religious revolution, whereby religion, whilst remaining true to its fundamental function of assuring social integration and cohesion, became nevertheless a source of unequalled consolation for individual distress, of unrivalled hope and comfort for the individual—this great religious revolution was the work of Christianity. Christianity proved hereby its immense superiority, in that it succeeded—and succeeded magnificently—in combining the defence of social interests with the defence of individual interests, in acting at

the same time as the supreme restraint on the individual and as the supreme consoler of the individual. Before Christianity, no religion had succeeded in effecting any sort of moral junction between the interests of society and those of the individual—no religion, unless we except the religion of Israel in its later stages, had ever made an effort to compensate the restrictions imposed on the individual by rewards for complying with irksome and wearisome regulations, had ever sought to gain the individual by persuasion as well as grinding him down by terror. The superiority of Christianity, the wonderful social adaptability possessed by it, consist essentially in the exquisite blending of severity and mildness. By the severity of the restraints imposed by it on the individual, Christianity proved its adaptability to social necessities; and by the unequalled consolation it offered, on the other hand, to the individual, Christianity proved its adaptability to individual needs. The older religions only manifested the single aspect of factors of social evolution; Christianity manifested the double aspect of a factor of social and of individual development.

It is precisely this double aspect presented by Christianity that has been misunderstood alike by its admirers and by its detractors. Admirers of Christianity have been too prone to see only the consolations offered by it for individual distress, the precepts inculcated by it with a view to furthering individual development. Detractors of Christianity have dwelt on the illusory nature of the consolations offered, on the fallacious character of the hope founded on the insecure basis of immortality; and they have expatiated on the irksomeness of the restraints imposed on individual liberty, of the numerous restrictions whereby the expansion of the superior individual, of the Super-Man, is curtailed and obstructed. Both sides have grasped only one of the aspects of Christianity; and in their inability to perceive the counterpart of this one aspect, they have diminished the part played by Christianity in

human evolution. The admirers of Christianity, seeing only the rights of the individual as safeguarded in the Christian doctrine, seeing only the consolations offered to individual distress, only the love and pity of Christ for the individual struggling beneath the burden of his cross—these have tended to overlook the other aspect of the Master's teaching, have tended to forget the duties of the individual and the rights of society, have tended to fall into a weak and sickly humanitarianism which must inevitably disintegrate society, shatter the bonds of social cohesion and unity. The foes of Christianity, of the type of Nietzsche, on the other hand, seeing only the restraints and restrictions imposed on the individual, seeing only in the teaching of Christ the antithesis of their ideal of boundless individual expansion, have entirely neglected to take into consideration the social value of those restraints, the social significance of such restrictions. Hence we see the danger of a one-sided, unilateral evaluation of the merits of Christianity as a factor of human evolution. We must never neglect to consider the double aspect of Christianity as an instrument at once of social and of individual development. We must not neglect to consider the rights and duties recognised by Christianity as appertaining alike to society and to the individual. Only when we consider Christianity under this double aspect, when we consider it *as realising an equilibrium between social and individual interests*, can we hope to judge rightly of its value.

In truth, the equilibrium which Christianity has been instrumental in realising between the interests of society and those of the individual, represents as perfect an equilibrium as it is humanly possible to imagine between interests which are naturally and fundamentally antagonistic to each other. The necessity of individual sacrifice is well recognised by the Christian doctrine; but this individual sacrifice, which cannot be compensated for on earth and in this life, shall receive

adequate reward after death. The balance between social and individual interests, which is so unfavourable in this life to the individual interests, shall be adjusted in the life to come. If the individual be condemned to sacrifice himself now to the interests of society, he shall recover, so to speak, the lost part of himself in Eternity. The diminished existence that he must needs lead on earth is but the prelude to the integral life beyond the tomb.

Under another aspect, again, we see the magnificent adaptability of Christianity to social and to individual necessities clearly manifesting itself. In primitive societies, the individual mind is absolutely dominated by the collective mind; individual thought is nearly non-existent; only in the rarest cases is any scope allowed for the individual to exercise his thinking faculties outside the sphere of the collective representations, that is to say, of those representations coined by the collective mind and imposed *a priori* on the individual. These collective representations are of an essentially mystical nature, they tend to grasp exclusively the subjective and mystical links between phenomena, to neglect wholly the objective and concrete links. Social progress, considered from a mental point of view, consists in the diminution of the "sphere of influence" of collective representations, in the liberation of individual thought from the yoke imposed by the collective mind. Concurrently with this diminution of the "sphere of influence" of collective representations, with this gradual liberation of individual thought from the social yoke, and as a necessary effect of the same, the formation of logical concepts becomes possible owing to the progressive differentiation of the intellectual element which, in the collective representations, is inextricably bound up with other elements, of an affective and a motor nature. But with the differentiation of the purely intellectual or cognitive element, whereby the formation of logical concepts is rendered possible and the growth of rational thought furthered,

the antagonism between the interests of the society and those of the individual cannot fail to manifest itself. In the measure that the individual emancipates himself from the tyranny of the collectivity, the power of the latter to impose restrictions on individual liberty inevitably diminishes. The rationally-minded individual will be less willing to accept the necessity of sacrificing a part of his existence in the interests of the future of society. In other words, the development of rationalism leads to a development of individualism; and the development of individualism cannot but menace the foundations of social existence. Hence the imperative necessity of effecting an equilibrium between social and individual interests, whereby the rights acquired by individual evolution are adjusted to the fundamental necessities of social life. Such an equilibrium, we have said, was realised by Christianity. Whilst fully appreciating the necessities of social existence and adequately safeguarding the interests of society accordingly, Christianity did not commit the error—which would have been fatal in view of the height already attained by mental evolution at the epoch of its introduction—of treating the individual as a negligible quantity, as a mere *bouc émissaire* capable of being indefinitely sacrificed to social needs. Whilst safeguarding the interests of society, Christ was also careful to minister to the needs of the individual. The duty of individual sacrifice was inculcated, but at the same time compensation for this sacrifice was offered.

The value of the equilibrium realised by Christianity between individual and social interests can be the better appreciated when we perceive the consequences that ensue from a rupture of this equilibrium. Under existing conditions, that have been gradually realised by long centuries of psychological evolution, such a rupture can be profitable only to the individual; the rupture must therefore have as its consequence the overflowing of the tide of individualism, which menaces

to sweep away the foundations of society. Such appears unfortunately to be the case in France to-day. The wise restraints edicted by Christianity having been abandoned as incompatible with revolutionary metaphysics, we see the torrent of egotism steadily gaining in force every day, threatening ever more and more the stability of French society, and the incomparable edifice of French civilisation.

We set out then from the standpoint that Christianity is not only a powerful factor of individual evolution, but also an essential factor of social evolution. Its sociological value resides in the fact that it established, at a momentous epoch in the world's history, when the break-up of society appeared to be imminent, an equilibrium between the interests of society and those of the individual, that it set up a barrier against individualism, whilst at the same time enhancing immeasurably the value of human personality. The supreme importance of Christianity lies far more in its objective sociological value, than in its subjective individual value. For if it were a mere individual phenomenon, a doctrine applicable solely to individual needs, it would in no wise guarantee the continuity of social existence—and consequently it would in no wise preserve the individual himself from ultimate destruction. It is time to transfer the justification of Christianity from the unstable basis of individual aspirations and individual wants, and to establish it on the sure basis of the sociological value of the Christian doctrine. The Christian doctrine contains a prescription for social ills and diseases, and not only a prescription for individual woes. In that it points so clearly to the path that leads to social salvation, Christianity *eo ipso* points to the path that leads to individual salvation. For we must bear in mind that the existence of the individual is conditioned by that of society—that outside the society the individual cannot be. In order, therefore, that the individual may evolve normally, it is necessary that the society evolve

normally, that the stability of the society be guaranteed. Individual welfare is subordinated to social welfare, even as individual existence is subordinated to social existence. The doctrine so greatly in favour to-day, and according to which the welfare of the individual is the basis of the welfare of society, is nothing but an inversion of the truth. The welfare of society, the continuity of social existence—consequently the welfare of the individual, the continuity of individual existence—demand that individual conduct shall conform itself to certain immutable rules. By conforming his conduct to these rules, by curtailing his liberty in the interests of society, by subordinating the satisfaction of his individual desires to the stability of the social aggregate—the individual is enabled to survive, albeit at the price of a sacrifice of part of his personality. His survival, and consequently his welfare, are thus conditioned by the survival and the welfare of society.

Hence those who would reduce Christianity to a mere doctrine for the individual, reduce immeasurably its signification and value. A doctrine which conduces solely to the satisfaction of individual aspirations and to the relief of individual distress, is a doctrine condemned to an existence as ephemeral as that of the individual. Only when we are in a position to appreciate its sociological value, to judge of its sociological purport, can we understand the extraordinary persistence of that Christian belief and of those Christian institutions which have survived, unchangeable, the changes produced by twenty centuries of social evolution.

## CHAPTER II

### RELIGION AND SOCIETY

THE study of the sociological value of Christianity brings us face to face with the fundamental problem of the part played by religion in social life. In the first chapter of the present work we have observed that religious beliefs present themselves to us everywhere as instruments of social survival, and that the great sociological task of religion is the securing of an equilibrium between the individual and society, between individual interests and social interests. We propose now to examine at greater length this all-important question of the influence of religion on social life.

### I

In the early stages of culture, religion is essentially the symbol of the unity of the social group, of the latter's power of expansion. It is in religion that the idea of the collectivity as such, that is to say, as a being *per se* apart from the individuals that compose it, is realised—in religion that the collectivity first attains to a consciousness of its existence. Religion is consequently the first form of organised thought —it represents the first effort made towards a classification of beings and objects. The first organisation of thought must necessarily be a collective organisation, seeing that the individual is completely submerged by the group, that

individual thought is wholly undifferentiated from collective thought. Religion being the earliest form of organised thought; and this form being likewise that in which the collectivity first attains to consciousness of its existence; it ensues that religion and society are, in primitive culture, synonymous terms. All social laws, customs, and sanctions appear clothed in a religious garb—emanate solely from the religious beliefs. In a word, social laws properly so called are non-existent at this stage of social evolution; the only laws extant are religious laws, for religion embraces in its scope all human activities and all the spheres of thought which are subsequently differentiated; and such religious laws possess immense influence and a vast authority, for the reason that religion is synonymous with the collectivity, that religious thought is synonymous with collective thought, and that no form of organised thought other than the collective form as yet exists.

As we observed in the first chapter, social progress is characterised, from a psychological point of view, by the ever-increasing differentiation of individual thought from collective thought, by the gradual diminution of the "sphere of influence" of collective representations, by the emancipation of the individual from the tyranny of the group. Only in the measure that individual thought differentiates itself from collective thought, does the formation of rational concepts become possible—for such concepts can be evolved only if the mystical collective representations, in which the cognitive element is amalgamated with motor and affective elements, lose their force and influence. Social progress is rendered possible by intellectual progress; and intellectual progress is possible only if the individual contrive to detach himself, in a certain measure, from society.

If the detachment of the individual from the collectivity leads to the formation of rational concepts, rationalism tends

in its turn to develop individualism, consequently to loosen the bonds of social solidarity. If this process be pursued far enough, the break-up of society must necessarily be the ultimate result. Hence we appear to be in presence of an anomaly: social progress, considered from a psychological point of view, consists in the development of a factor—*i.e.* rationalism — incompatible with social integration, consequently with the continuity of social existence. But if such be indeed the social function of rationalism, the latter would certainly never have been evolved; seeing that the development of an organ in a species that survives, is always a proof of the utility of that organ, or at any rate of its indifference—*i.e.* of such an organ being devoid of any biological importance, consequently of its being incapable of producing any harmful effects. The conclusion to be arrived at is, therefore, that the social function of rationalism cannot reside in its tendency to produce social disruption—that its social function, on the contrary, must be one that responds to social needs.

We find, as a matter of fact, that the social function of rationalism consists in the latter's ability to secure the adaptation of society to environing conditions with less expenditure of social force. Thanks to the development of rationalism, we are enabled to know better the great natural laws which govern human evolution. This knowledge permits us, not indeed to escape these laws, to which we must invariably remain subject—but to foresee the consequences of their operation. It permits us, not to suppress natural laws, but to nullify the action of one natural force by the action of another, to utilise such forces and to dispose of them for our own profit. It permits us, further, to second the action of laws whose working is beneficial to us: as in the case of the law of selection. Natural selection is a negative process which weeds-out unsatisfactory elements; and the develop-

ment of our intellect and of our knowledge permits of our completing natural selection by means of a reasoned social selection, that is to say, by a positive process which "selects" the eugenic elements of the race. By enabling us to comprehend the working of natural laws, rationalism enables us to put ourselves into harmony with these laws, to adapt ourselves to them—thereby permitting a positive increase of happiness, and a positive diminution of misery. Herein lies the social function of rationalism.

But if rationalism is to fulfil its indispensable social function, *it must be limited.* Unlimited rationalism conduces, not to social welfare, but to social disintegration—for it leads to an excessive unilateral assertion of individual rights, assertion which is incompatible with the co-existence of social rights. Having its basis in the individual reason, it can be limited only by a power exterior to the individual. In primitive stages of culture, the only power exterior to the individual and superior to him, is society. But when the individual is no longer completely submerged in the group; when his mentality is no longer entirely dominated by the collective mentality — when his representations are no longer co-extensive with the collective representations; then is evidently the power of society over him very considerably reduced. First of all it is certain that precisely that part of the individual which has emancipated itself from social control, will not submit itself henceforth to an authority that it has outgrown.

It is here that religion steps in. In primitive societies, as we have said, religion and society are synonymous terms—religious thought is synonymous with social thought. But, in the measure that individual thought differentiates itself from collective thought, the latter tends also to become ever less co-extensive with religious thought. *The differentiation of the terms religion and society, is the counterpart of the differentia-*

*tion of the terms individual and society.* In the later religions, notably in the religion of the Israelites and in Christianity, we find ever more and more developed the idea of a Moral Law exterior to society, and which at once dominates society and completes the latter. In Christianity this idea of the Moral Law attains the highest point of its evolution. In Christianity we find the Moral Law acting at once as a reinforcement and as an extension of the social law. In other words, the moral sphere contains the social sphere, but is not limited by it.

The ethical religions, and especially Christianity, constitute an extension of society and of the social law, in that they subordinate directly to themselves that part of the individual which has liberated itself from social control. Religion thus imposes a limitation on rationalism, limitation which responds to the necessities of social life. *By limiting rationalism in this way, religion adapts it therefore to its social function.* By subordinating directly to itself that part of individual life and of individual thought which is no longer subject to the tyranny of collective representations, religion restrains the excessive development of egotism, and checks the too unilateral and violent assertion of individual rights at the expense of social rights. In primitive societies the social law is able to control the entire personality; in higher stages of culture, the Moral Law of the ethical religions fulfils, in respect of the "rationalised personality," the same task as the social law originally fulfilled as regards the entire personality—and which it still continues to fulfil, supported henceforth by the sanctions of the Moral Law, as regards that part of human conduct which is still "socialised."

We see, then, that the first social function of religion in the higher stages of culture, is the limitation of rationalism, with a view to adapting the latter, in its turn, to the social function it is destined to fulfil. By means of the limitation

of rationalism, *religion establishes an equilibrium between the individual and society, in the interests of both.* If rationalism be not limited, this necessary equilibrium is destroyed—for an unlimited development of reason leads to an unlimited assertion of individual rights at the expense of social rights. But as the individual cannot live outside society, as individual existence is conditioned by social existence—it is evident that immediate short-lived advantages must be sacrificed by the individual to ultimate and permanent benefits, even though —as is generally the case—he never reap the latter himself. The equilibrium realised by religion, is realised by means of the notion of Duty. Duty is a categorical imperative, reinforced by an Absolute sanction. It constitutes the counterpart of the notion of Rights; and, in the moral system of Christianity, an exact correlation between the two is established, so that the rights of every individual—rights which are conditioned by capacity—are exactly balanced by his duties. *Reason suffices for the dictation of individual rights; but it is not capable of dictating to the individual the corresponding duties*—much less of attaching to the notion of Duty the notion of an adequate sanction.

The limitation of the "rationalised personality" by religion, as also the subordination of the still socialised part of human conduct to social laws—both imply the sacrifice of individual (*i.e.* egotistical) interests. In primitive societies, where the individual is wholly under social control, this sacrifice is effected without the slightest recompense being offered or, indeed, hoped for. It must not be thought that primitive men are more disinterested than civilised ones—for the psychological motives underlying human conduct remain invariably the same. If primitive man sacrifices himself to society without receiving or hoping for any compensation, this is due solely to the fact that he is so solidly embedded in the group to which he belongs, that his

existence as individual is reduced to the lowest possible *minimum*. Living exclusively for the collectivity, thinking almost exclusively by means of representations coined for him *a priori* by the collectivity, dominated at every moment of his existence by the all-absorbing influence of society, the power of the latter is sufficient to compel him to make all the sacrifices of his personal liberty required by the group. It is only later, when the individual has emancipated himself in a certain degree from social tyranny, when thought has become partly rational, that the utility of sacrificing individual interests to social interests will come to be questioned. As the necessity of a certain sacrifice of egotism remains, it becomes indispensable to counterbalance the notion of sacrifice by the notion of recompense.

As we observed in the first chapter, it will remain the great merit of Christianity, and a proof of the wonderful knowledge possessed by its founder and first organisers of human psychology as well as of social necessities, that this great religion took account of the individual as well as of society. The rationalised human being is no longer in the same situation as irrational primitive man. Christianity understood this well. It understood that, when the individual has once attained a certain degree of rational independence, he is no longer a mere blind tool. True, the individual thus rationalised is capable of obedience and submission, of sacrifice and self-restraint; but it is necessary that some compensation for his sacrifice be offered him — that moral persuasion strengthened by Hope replace the purely material tyranny of early society. When the unlimited power of society in its primitive stages no longer exists, the difficulty of curbing egotism very considerably augments. Even when the ethical religions, leaving moral persuasion aside, have recourse to material acts of pressure, they cannot hope to make their restraints anything like as efficacious as the restraints imposed

by primitive societies on their members. The reason for this is that individualism and egotism, being derived from the development of rational thought, cannot be curbed by acts of material pressure, but only by an efficient moral control. But a moral control, if it is to be efficacious, cannot neglect the fundamental sentiments at the basis of the moral and mental life of the individual, once this life commences to evolve independently of collective representations—that is to say, the egotistical sentiments. Such a moral control must, to be efficacious, utilise these sentiments: and this is precisely what Christianity did. Christianity restrained egotism in this life by the hope of compensation hereafter—it vanquished egotistical desires by other egotistical desires. In so doing, it showed its consummate knowledge of human psychology, its profound sense of realities. And not only that: but also its profound sense of justice. For does not justice require that Duty and Compensation be correlative notions?

By means of these correlative notions of Duty and Compensation, Christianity has realised as perfect an equilibrium as possible between individual interests and social interests. It has obtained the necessary sacrifice of the individual to society; and it has contrived, by means of the promise of compensation, to make the sacrifice less one-sided—it has contrived to unite the ideas of sacrifice and of justice.

## II

In primitive societies the individual is very rigorously incorporated by the group; the latter, being small and undifferentiated, is able to subordinate to itself the entire life of each one of its members. The savage has practically no existence outside his group; his actions and thoughts alike confound themselves with the actions and thoughts of society. In these primitive stages of culture, the influence exerted by

society over the individual attains a degree of which civilised man can form no adequate conception. In the measure that social aggregates increase in size and that the functions and structure of society become differentiated, the power of society over the individual diminishes. In Western civilisation to-day, society is too vast and too complex an organisation to be able to control efficaciously the activity of its members. The individual is too far removed from society for the latter to be able to incorporate him with anything like the rigour of primitive social groups; in so extensive and so highly differentiated an aggregate, the individual necessarily escapes supervision, except in such cases when he commits the particularly violent and flagrant acts of insubordination designed as crimes. It becomes indispensable, under these circumstances, for society to section itself into a number of subdivisions, which, being less extensive, are better adapted to the task of controlling the individual and of incorporating him. Such subdivisions are constituted by the various classes, professions, corporations, syndicates, etc. These serve as intermediaries between the individual and the whole society. Their dimensions being limited, they are, as we have said, better able to incorporate and to control the individual, because they stand nearer to him than does society as a whole, because they embrace more directly the sphere of his daily activities and interests.

In a strongly integrated society, in which religion has secured a harmonious equilibrium between the individual and society, between individual interests and social interests, all such subdivisions are adapted to the end in view of which they were evolved, namely, the "socialisation" of the individual. The individual is, in such a case, attached to society by means of the notion of Duty, and his egotism is subordinated to higher, extra-individual aims; this being so, he will work *through the agency of his class or professional organisation for*

*the benefit of the whole society.* There where the subordination of egotism to extra-individual aims, and the consequent integration of society, are adequately realised thanks to religious influences, the individual is adapted to society; and the various subdivisions of the latter are similarly adapted to the needs of the whole.

But when the bonds of social solidarity are slackened, when individualism—that is to say, egotism—gains the upper hand over the sentiment of fraternity, when the great notion of social duty is obscured; then will the individual seek to convert the class into an instrument of social disintegration. The class is then no longer adapted to its natural function, which we have seen to be that of "socialising" the individual, of binding the individual more securely to the social aggregate. The social subdivision, be it class or professional organisation, becomes a mere instrument whereby the egotistical interests of the individuals composing the subdivision in question may be more easily and more conveniently satisfied. Such is the state of affairs in Western society at the present day—a state of affairs that we see peculiarly well shown-up in contemporary France. French society, as we have pointed out elsewhere, is divided up into a number of heterogeneous groups, each at war with the other, and all of them equally destitute of any comprehension of the wider interests of the nation. While the working classes, following the instructions of their leaders, have transformed the labour syndicates into so many revolutionary organisations; while the *bourgeoisie* has considered the power entrusted to it simply as a means for enriching itself and for satisfying sectarian hatred, absolutely regardless of what the consequences may be; we see great bodies of public servants, like the Post Office employees and the rail-road employees, deliberately paralysing the entire life of a great nation, and exposing the latter to the gravest perils in case of invasion, in order that some personal grievances, real

or imaginary, may be redressed. If the dangers of class egotism, as we would call the egotism of any one of the subdivisions, such as the class or the professional organisation, that go to make up society, be particularly manifest in France; this does not mean that similar class egotism is non-existent elsewhere. Unfortunately it is rampant everywhere; and everywhere it produces dire results.

We have seen that religion ensures an equilibrium between the individual and society by means of the notion of Duty: it impresses on the individual the necessity of fulfilling his duty towards society, of sacrificing his egotistical interests to the welfare of the collectivity. Evidently, if religion be an active force in social life, the individual, mindful of his duty towards society, will seek to utilise the force inherent to his class or to his professional organisation, in order to further exclusively social interests. This being so, we see that the adaptation of the class or of the professional organisation to their respective social functions, in other words, the limitation of what we have termed class egotism, result from the adaptation of the individual to his social functions, that is to say, from the limitation of individual egotism. Thus if the individual be strongly integrated in society, the class and the professional organisation will be *ipso facto* elements of social cohesion. But if the individual be detached from society, if the bonds of social solidarity are slackened by the growth of egotism, the individual can nevertheless remain strongly attached to his class or to his professional organisation, or to both; and, in this case, as we have seen, such subdivisions will become active elements of social disintegration, because they are henceforth instruments for furthering egotistical interests at the expense of collective interests. In other words, the integration of the individual in society implies a similar integration of the social subdivisions; but, on the other hand, the integration of the individual in any one of these

subdivisions, does not imply his integration in society—neither does it imply the integration of such subdivisions.

When religion has ensured an equilibrium between the individual and society, it has *ipso facto* ensured an equilibrium between the subdivisions of society and the whole. We may say therefore that a third social function of religion consists *in establishing harmonious relations between society and its various subdivisions, such as the class, the professional organisation*, etc. The establishment of such harmonious relations implies the realisation of an equilibrium between those subdivisions. Egotism in one class engenders egotism in the others. The abuse made by one class of the strength inherent to it, will necessarily cause a weakening of the social feelings in the other classes, a diminution of their attachment to the collectivity, to the *respublica*. The cynical misuse of their power and riches by the *bourgeois* classes has necessarily had as its counterpart the misuse of their power by the working-classes, the destruction of all sentiment of social duty, of social solidarity, in the latter. An equilibrium must be established between the classes, based on the idea of the duty of each class being proportionate to its power, capacity, and rank. Only when the liabilities of each class as regards the collectivity are proportioned to what may be called the patrimony of the class, and only when each class is strictly bound to perform the duties attributed to it, can we expect class egotism to give way to wider sentiments of social solidarity. Social solidarity is conditioned by a sliding-scale of reciprocal class duties that are scrupulously fulfilled.

Although the growth of the social sentiment in the individual engenders the growth of the social sentiment in the class, yet religion—or, at all events, the Christian religion—does not content itself with inculcating only to the individual the notion of Duty. Christianity addresses itself directly to the classes, inculcates directly to the classes

the duty of subordinating class interests to social interests. The class has two great duties which merge one into the other: a duty towards society as a whole, and a duty towards each of the other classes. The duty of the classes towards each other confounds itself with their duty towards the whole society. Only when each class fulfils its obligations towards the other, does it fulfil its obligations towards the collectivity, towards the *respublica*. Even as duty and responsibility increase with individual capacity, so do they likewise increase with the rank of the class—for the rank of the class depends, or ought to depend, on the average capacity of the individuals composing it.

The social integration realised by religion implies therefore the checking of individual egotism, and of class egotism. When the former is checked, the latter will *ipso facto* be held under restraint. *Vice versa* does the growth of individual egotism always entail the correlative growth of class egotism. Egotism being naturally the most powerful sentiment in individual life, the tendency must always be present to make use of the power and influence derived from the class, in order to further egotistical interests. Present in all classes, such a tendency is inevitably stronger in the classes at the top of the social hierarchy. It requires discipline of a rare force to be able to prevent the individual with much capacity, much power, and many riches, from misusing these advantages—to be able to induce him to employ these advantages for the collective welfare, rather than for individual welfare. The biographer of Jesus of Nazareth tells us that the young man whom the Master counselled to sell his goods and give the proceeds to the poor, went away very sorrowful—for he was rich. And Jesus pronounced the words that millionaire Christian company promoters prefer to pass over in silence: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The words do not

signify that Jesus condemned riches *per se*. But Jesus saw in wealth, not an end, but a means to an end—a means for doing good to the community. When he said that the rich shall have difficulty in entering the kingdom of God, he was insisting on the immense difficulty, for the rich man, of combating egotism, of putting his wealth at the service of higher ideals, of not employing that wealth solely for the satisfaction of egotistical wants and desires. And thereby did Jesus once more manifest his profound knowledge of human life and of the human character.

Difficult indeed is it to prevent the individual succumbing to a narrow egotism. The picture of the narrow path and the narrow gate that lead to salvation, is an exceedingly true symbol of the immense and manifold difficulties that await the individual at every step of his career as a social being—difficulties that increase in the measure that capacity, power, rank, wealth, increase. Powerful indeed must be the force which is able to restrain and to curb egotism, to integrate the individual so solidly in society that he is willing to sacrifice himself in the interests of social welfare. In primitive societies, as we have said, the question does not arise—seeing that the life of the individual is almost entirely absorbed in the life of the collectivity. But in the societies of Western civilisation, where the individual is in so large a measure detached from society, where he in so large a measure escapes social control —the problem becomes at once a redoubtable one. For the continuity of social existence depends on the repression of egotism—and, in the first place, of individual egotism, seeing that class egotism is but a derivation from the former. To attempt to repress egotism, in Western society, by means of material compulsion, is useless; the only efficacious restraint can be a moral one. The individual being in so large a measure detached from society, it is likewise evident that society is not in a position to impose anything like adequate discipline on him. It must therefore needs be a power

superior to society, to which recourse must be had; and this power is a moral one. By far the most satisfactory moral power is religion, for alone the commands issued in the name of religion possess a sufficient force, and are backed by sufficient sanctions, to be able to impose themselves as categorical imperatives. Religion being thus the only force capable of imposing adequate restraints on egotism, it ensues that alone religion can guarantee social integration—that religion is thus the instrument best adapted to the maintenance of social life.

A fourth social function of religion is therefore *the securing of social integration.* We have seen that religion limits rationalism, in the interests of society, by subordinating to itself that part of the individual which escapes all social control—what we have called the "rationalised personality" of the individual. This subordination of the individual is obtained by means of the creation of a powerful ideal that dominates individual existence; and by means of the notion of Duty, conceived of as a categorical imperative supported by adequate sanctions. Only if the individual be subordinated to a higher power, can egotism be restrained; and only if egotism be restrained, can the equilibrium between individual interests and social interests, which we have seen to be indispensable to the continuity of social existence, be realised. But the subordination of the individual to a power higher than himself, can itself be effective only if the individual be strongly and solidly integrated in society—only if the idea of Duty presents itself to him with irresistible force, in such a manner that he be willing to sacrifice to Duty a part of himself and his interests. Thus is social integration the fundamental condition of social life; and the social function of religion which we have enunciated last is in reality the primordial function—for only if this function be satisfactorily accomplished can the other functions be carried out.

It must not for a moment be supposed that the four social

functions of religion successively enunciated by us are distinct and separate functions. On the contrary, they merge into each other, condition each other—are, in fact, various aspects of the one fundamental function of securing social integration. Only if society be sufficiently integrated can the individual be subordinated to a higher ideal and to a higher law; and only if he be thus subordinated, can the necessary equilibrium between the individual and society, between society and its subdivisions, be established. If society is sufficiently integrated, if the notion of social Duty have sufficient hold over the individual, then will the individual be willing to subordinate his interests to those of society— then will the equilibrium between the individual and society be realised. Everything thus depends on social integration—on the efficacity of the principles on which the notion of Duty is based, on the efficacity of the sanction which gives to this notion the character of a categorical imperative. As we have said, no principles appear so efficacious as religious principles, no sanction so powerful as the religious sanction. By removing the Moral Law to the domain of the Absolute, religion effectively takes away from the individual all possibility of discussion. Its commands, emanating as they do from a sphere into which the human reason cannot penetrate, appear as something unquestionable. The system of Christianity possesses immense social efficacity, in that it not only subordinates to itself that "rationalised personality" which escapes all social control; but also in that it reinforces social laws by representing the latter as approved by the Moral Law, and by requiring, in consequence, submission to such social laws as a duty towards the Moral Law. *Reddite quae sunt Caesaris, Caesari; et quae sunt Dei, Deo*—this is a command which embraces the whole extent of individual life, and which indicates the conduct that the individual is to observe in regard both to social and to moral (or religious) laws. He is to submit himself to social laws; and, in respect

of those acts and thoughts not under social control, he is to be subordinate to the Moral Law.

## III

The idea of a moral law superior to social law is entirely absent from primitive conceptions. In primitive societies, not only is there no moral law apart from the social law, but the latter is itself destitute of any moral element. The "morality" of the savage, which Herbert Spencer believed to represent a primitive golden age destroyed by the advent of civilisation, is in reality entirely lacking in any ethical basis. In a word, primitive "morality" is of a magical, and not of an ethical, nature. If the savage refrains from committing certain acts, this is due, not to any comprehension of what right or wrong means, but to fear of certain magical consequences which must automatically ensue if the acts in question be committed. The only criminals, in early stages of culture, are those who violate the law of *taboo*. It is in the form of *taboo* that the first prohibitions are issued, that the first restraints on individual liberty are enforced. If the negative elements of savage "morality" are thus based on fear of certain magical consequences that ensue if prohibited acts are committed; so are the positive elements similarly inspired by fear of the magical consequences that ensue if acts that are expressly enjoined be left undone. The abstention from certain acts, and the perpetration of certain other acts, have an identical motive, which is wholly unethical in its nature.

Ethical laws being entirely unknown to the primitive mentality, it is evident that the relations of the individual to society cannot be regulated by any moral conceptions. Moral laws, as we have observed, are unknown to primitive societies. From a sociological point of view, this absence of any ethical element in early culture is explained by the fact that the

individual is completely submerged in society—that he has scarcely any existence as individual apart from his existence as a cell of the social organism, which latter dominates completely his whole life. Under these circumstances the moral law has no sociological function to fulfil; and it is consequently non-existent. The development of the moral law is correlative of the development of rationalism. The growth of the rational spirit, the progressive emancipation of the "rationalised personality" from the tyranny of the group, are the factors that engender the moral law; and they must necessarily engender such a law, if society is not to fall to pieces.

In the measure that rationalism gains ground, does the individual detach himself from the collectivity. The material pressure exercised on him in early stages of culture becomes insufficient, once the differentiation of the individual from the group has progressed far enough. We see therefore—as we have previously remarked—the separation of the individual and society accompanied by a process, whereby society and religion tend to become ever more and more differentiated from each other. But the differentiation between society and religion does not, like the differentiation between society and the individual, signify the growth of an antagonism between the two. This differentiation does not imply a separation, much less an antagonism. Religion continues to be allied to society, the religious (or moral) law supports and reinforces the social law, the authority of which it backs-up by means of supra-social sanctions. But religion is no longer *identical* with society; henceforth it dominates the latter. Religious law is no longer identical with social law; the sphere of the former is henceforth wider, and embraces also the sphere of the social law. In other words: whereas, in primitive culture, religion and society are identical conceptions; whereas, in these early stages, religious law is synonymous with social law; religion becomes later *an extension of society*, religious

law becomes an extension, a completion, of social law. In primitive societies, no need exists for completing the social law by a higher law, seeing that the individual is wholly submerged in society, is dominated in all his acts and thoughts by the authority of society—seeing that the material pressure which society is able to bring to bear on him, suffices alike to restrain him from action and to prompt him to action. Only in the measure that the individual, as a result of mental evolution, detaches himself from the collectivity and contrives thereby to escape social control, does it become necessary, in the interest of the continuity of social existence, to reinforce and complete the authority of society by the authority of the Moral Law—that is to say, of a law capable of controlling that part of human conduct which henceforth escapes the control of the social law.

Religion is thus a social creation, created by society with a view to safeguarding its own interests as against the individual. In primitive stages of culture, religion and society are identical conceptions, for religion is the first form in which thought organises itself, and it is in this form that society first attains to consciousness of its existence as a collectivity, that is to say, as a being *per se*, distinct from the individuals composing it. The earliest form of law and morals, as of all other functions of social life, whether economic, esthetic, intellectual, or political, is the religious form—it is from religious beliefs that all the varied manifestations of social activity, which have subsequently differentiated themselves in the course of social evolution, derive in the first instance. Social evolution is one long-continued process of differentiation, whereby ever-increasing heterogeneity has gradually replaced an original homogeneity. As social aggregates increased in dimension and in complexity; as the primitive forms of mentality gave way to higher forms; so was it inevitable that religion, in the long run, should differentiate

itself from society, even as the individual differentiated himself and slowly emerged from the social group. In the early stages of culture, religion was not only a social creation, but also an *exclusively social* element; in later stages, while remaining a social creation, it widened itself and extended its boundaries beyond the limits of society. Being originally identical with social law, religion knew no higher sanction for conduct than a purely material sanction; only later, when it outgrew, so to speak, the social law, could religion create sanctions of a moral nature.

We may say, therefore, that when social evolution had arrived at a stage at which the differentiation of the individual and of society could proceed no further without the existence of society being seriously menaced, a correlative differentiation of social law and of religious law became indispensable. Society could only hope to maintain a certain authority over the individual by projecting, so to speak, its authority into the sphere of the Absolute—by giving unto its authority an extension outside the limits of the finite world. The "rationalised personality" of the individual being henceforth independent of social control, it was indispensable that it be submitted to an authority exterior to society: and no authority above society can be found, unless we cross the frontiers of the Relative and enter the domain of the Absolute. In its early stages religion is limited by society—for society has no need of a reinforcement of its authority from outside, seeing that the individual is sufficiently integrated in the group. But in later stages religion exceeds the limits of society, even as the individual exceeds them. Society being unable to control the "rationalised personality" of the individual, needs a power exterior to itself, and which surpasses it, in order to bring this rationalised personality to submission.

The sociological function of religious belief remains essentially the same in all stages of social evolution; the methods

alone whereby that function is fulfilled, modify themselves in view of the adaptation of the function to changed conditions. Social integration would never have been realised had it not been for religion—for it is in its religious beliefs, as we have said, that society first attains to the consciousness of its existence. The formation of society is thus due to religion, and the continuity of social existence is conditioned by the continuity of religious beliefs. Only when collective thought had organised itself, could it hope to impose itself *a priori* on the individual—only then could obedience be imposed on the individual in the form of a categorical imperative. Collective thought, in the shape of collective beliefs, imposes itself in early stages of culture with such extraordinary force, because individual thought is not organised—is, indeed, hardly existent. Not until individual thought has become organised by means of rational concepts, from which the mystical elements imposed by collective thought are banished, does the individual attain to a consciousness of his personality—that is to say, of his existence as individual, apart from his existence as a mere social element. In early stages of culture, the subordination of the individual to collective aims is thus easy of accomplishment; for alone collective thought is organised, alone the collectivity has attained to consciousness of its existence, consequently to consciousness of its power; whereas individual thought is as yet wholly unorganised, the individual is as yet wholly ignorant of a personal existence distinct from his social existence. He is therefore at the mercy of the collectivity. *But the collectivity can itself exist only as a religious collectivity.* Without an organised system of collective beliefs there is no collectivity, but only a number of loose atoms without cohesion. Religion is therefore not merely a social force, but *the* social force *par excellence.*

In order to survive, a society must be able to adapt itself to a modified environment. *Ipso facto* must religion, which

conditions social existence, likewise possess sufficient plasticity and adaptability. This we have seen to be the case. When the conditions of social life have been completely modified by the growth of rationalism, by the evolution of individual thought and individual self-consciousness, religion extends its boundaries, widens its scope, takes on new forms, in order to continue the fulfilment of the same indispensable social function. When society has need of a reinforcement of its authority, has need of a power higher than itself in order to subordinate the individual, who has outgrown his former limited existence —then do we find religion abandoning its original mechanical character, and assimilating to itself new elements, of a moral nature. Commands and prohibitions are no longer accompanied by material, automatic sanctions; the sanction for conduct becomes a moral one, it is transported to a world into which human reason cannot penetrate, and which is therefore superior to all rational criticism.

Individual interests being invariably in latent antagonism to social interests; and the latter being guaranteed by the authority of religious belief, by the categorical imperative of the Moral Law; it was inevitable that rationalism should seek to undermine this Moral Law, should seek to deprive it of its Absolute character, and thereby render it accessible to rational criticism. Having outgrown the authority of the social law, with its purely material sanctions, it could not be expected that individual thought remain henceforth stationary —rational thought could not be expected to submit itself permanently to the Moral Law, which is but an extension of the social law, the result of the removal of the power always necessary to ensure individual subordination, to a higher sphere, inaccessible to rational research and criticism. Rationalism, having carried by storm the first line of entrenchments defending the fortress of society, was held up for a time by the inner line of entrenchments, more formidable and

more difficult of access than the first ones; but, at a given moment, it was bound to renew the assault, bound to turn its batteries against these inner entrenchments. The individual had liberated himself from the greater number of the irksome restraints imposed on him by society; nevertheless he found his dearly-won liberty always curtailed, he found that at nearly every step forward new barriers confronted him, obstructing his further progress on the road of self-assertion. In the measure that his thought emancipated itself from the tyranny of collective representations, that the consciousness of his personality developed itself, the individual found himself confronted by the Moral Law, which, spectre-like, escaped all the efforts made to grasp it. Little by little the "sphere of influence" of the collective representations had been diminished, the vast network of mystical links connecting phenomena had been progressively reduced. The number of phenomena rendered accessible to rational interpretation had constantly increased; and with this increase in the number of phenomena subjected to rational observation and criticism —with the concurrent decrease of the influence and authority of collective religious beliefs—it was inevitable that a decrease in the power of the collectivity over the individual should go hand in hand. For the entire regulation of human conduct was intimately and inextricably bound up with those beliefs whose influence and authority were constantly diminishing. In the measure that the notion of *taboo* ceased to find credence, must the power of that notion to prohibit certain acts necessarily have diminished. In the measure that magical ideas in general ceased to be believed in, must the power of such ideas to induce the individual to commit various acts of obedience, chastity, hospitality, etc., have likewise diminished. Thus individual conduct was gradually freed from many restraints; and the fundamental notion of individual Duty must sooner or later have shared the fate of the collective beliefs on which

it was founded, and which constituted its sanction. And yet, despite the immense reduction of the "sphere of influence" of mystical collective representations during the many centuries that separate the earliest religious beliefs from the advent of monotheism, the individual still found himself dominated, at the latter epoch, by the notion of Duty—still found himself nearly as far removed as formerly from the goal of integral liberty. The automatic sanction for conduct which, in primitive stages of culture, must have been so wonderfully efficacious, no longer existed; for belief in *taboo*, and other magico-religious beliefs of a similar nature, had vanished. The material sanction still remaining for various acts of a peculiarly delictuous character, although acting as a certain restraint, clearly could not possess the efficacity of the automatic sanction of former times, seeing that the individual had always the possibility of escaping detection, and consequently of escaping punishment. It seemed therefore as if the individual must soon arrive at his complete emancipation from all the restraints implied by the notion of Duty, in view of the absence of all adequate sanction accompanying this notion.

Nevertheless was this not the case. In the measure that the old beliefs with their automatic material sanctions for conduct were undermined by the progress of rationalism, new beliefs with new sanctions took their place: the power that the collectivity lost on earth, so to speak, it regained in heaven. The primitive automatic sanctions for conduct could not in the long run withstand the development of rational observation and rational criticism. But the moral sanctions, vested in the hands of an Omnipotent and Omnipresent Deity, were beyond the domain of observation and criticism. *The individual found himself still checked and hampered at every step, by means of an extension in the direction of the Infinite and Absolute of the same collective representations, the power of which had been so*

*greatly reduced within the sphere of the finite and relative.* The sanction for conduct, although no longer automatic and material, was none the less unavoidable, seeing that the culprit could not possibly escape detection. Duty, together with the restraints implied by it on individual liberty, remained as rigorously sanctioned as before—albeit in a different manner; and the sanction appeared the more formidable, because it descended on the culprit in a mysterious way unknown to us, because mortal eye could not judge of its effects. In a word, the individual had but exchanged one yoke for another; and the second yoke could never possibly be removed, seeing that the Moral Law is by its nature eternal, because Absolute.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable, as we have said, that rationalism should seek to deprive the Moral Law of its absolute character, should seek to place it within the domain of the relative, alone accessible to rational criticism. So long as the individual remained subjected to a Moral Law beyond the control of rational judgment, was it impossible for him to escape from restrictions that prevented the satisfaction of some of the strongest egotistical desires. The so-called Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, which had been prepared by the intellectual movement during the two preceding centuries, can only be properly appreciated, from a sociological point of view, if we see in it the first systematic attempt made by rationalism to undermine the Moral Law by reducing the latter to a mere phenomenon—by withdrawing it from the domain of the Absolute in order to render it accessible to observation and criticism. True, the Protestant theologians of the sixteenth century still held fast to the notion of an immutable and absolute Moral Law which they identified with God; but by declaring that the Moral Law is revealed unto each individual, that the individual finds in himself the germs of this Law implanted by God, and that

he must develop those germs in the manner which appears best to him and which best satisfies his reason—by this teaching, based on the fundamental idea underlying all Protestantism, namely, that the criterion of truth is within the individual, Protestant theologians opened wide the gates to all subsequent rational criticism. We may thus consider Protestantism as the first decisive step on the road that leads to the disintegration of Western society.

The Moral Law can possess efficacity, can fulfil its sociological function of subordinating the individual to society, only if it be placed beyond the reach of criticism, only if it be rendered independent of the fluctuations of individual judgment. The Protestant doctrine of subjectivism undermines the foundations of social integration, in that it removes the criterion of truth from a power exterior to the individual, in order to place it within the individual. And if the individual be himself the measure of all truth, he is *ipso facto* liberated from all obedience to laws that are not of his own making. This being so, it ensues necessarily that the individual can invariably follow the inclinations of his passions, of his personal likes and dislikes—can invariably give full satisfaction to his egotistical wants and desires; for all his acts can be justified by the appeal to his individual conscience, that is to say, to a tribunal that is extra-territorial in the fullest sense of the word, to a tribunal which escapes all exterior control. The doctrines of individualist anarchism as preached by Stirner and Nietzsche, descend legitimately from the subjective moralism of Kant and from the teaching of Calvin and Luther. Once it is admitted that the individual is himself the measure of all truth, the doors are thrown open to every aberration, to the most extreme doctrines of individualism contained in Stirner's famous book, as well as to the most pernicious forms of religious folly, such as Anabaptism.

The integration of the societies composing Western civilisation can be effected only if the criterion of truth be exterior to the individual, only if the individual be subjected to a higher law accepted *quod semper, quod ubique, quod omnibus.* But a moral law based on subjectivism can never be universal, for universality and individuality are two conceptions that are opposed to each other. A proposition can become an universal truth only if all the individuals composing society at a given moment bow down before a law recognised as superior to them—before a law which is above the subjective judgment of the individual. There is no such thing as individual morality, any more than there exists such a phenomenon as individual religion: there can only be a collective morality, even as there can only be a collective religion. When it is proposed to lay the foundations of ethical law in the individual conscience, then is the whole nature and *raison d'être* of ethical law misunderstood. Morals, like religion which is their natural basis, are not an individual phenomenon, but an exclusively social phenomenon. They must therefore have their foundation, not in the individual, but in society—not in individual beliefs, but in collective beliefs. They do not, any more than does religion, exist primordially for the benefit of the individual; if the individual gains any profit from them, it is but secondarily. They exist for the benefit of society, by whom they are created. A subjective moral law is thus a contradiction: the moral law cannot have a subjective basis, because it is not a law invented by the individual for individual benefit, but a law created by society in the latter's interests. Even as religion must necessarily have a basis exterior to the individual, because it is a social creation destined to subordinate the individual to society; so must morals have a supra-individual basis, for the Moral Law is essentially a religious law, and its aim therefore confounds itself with the aim of religion in general, namely,

the subordination of the individual, the repression of egotism.

The sociological study of religion and morals leads us, as will be seen, to very different conclusions from those generally accepted both in orthodox and in non-orthodox schools of thought. The general view prevailing is that religion exists primarily, if not exclusively, for the benefit of the individual; and only quite secondarily, if indeed at all, for the benefit of society. The sociologist will come to a diametrically opposite conclusion, as soon as he seeks to analyse alike the nature of religious belief, and the deeper causes which underlie the persistence of that belief, under various forms, in all societies at all times and in all latitudes. Everywhere does the nature of religious belief manifest itself as *an organisation of collective representations imposed on the individual in the interests of society.* Everywhere do we find these collective representations, in one shape or another, persisting and maintaining themselves, *because the existence of society depends on the existence of such representations.* If we consider religion as existing for the benefit of the individual; if we regard its precepts, prohibitions, commands, and representations in general, as having been created by the individual conscience in response to individual needs; then indeed, as we observed in the first chapter, does religion remain an inexplicable enigma. Christianity, as we have said, is the religion that takes most count of the individual; and yet how greatly does even Christianity restrain individual liberty!

It follows that religion, and the Moral Law which is derived from religion, must be studied, not in the individual, but in society. The value of every institution resides in its capacity to fulfil the function for which it was created: this is the sole criterion which science, the product of rational thought, possesses whereby to judge of the value of any institution. Consequently can the value of a religious system

be appreciated only according to the ability manifested by such a system to fulfil the sociological function of religion in general—which we have seen to be the maintenance of social integration, the obtention of an equilibrium between social interests and individual interests. The first question to be put, therefore, when examining the merits of a religious system, is this: In what measure has that system succeeded in maintaining social integration, in reconciling individual interests and social interests by subordinating the former to the latter? The value of a religious system can be judged only from the point of view of society, not from the point of view of the individual, seeing that religion is a social creation, and that its function is a social function. It is only natural that the majority of persons should judge their religious beliefs according to the amount of personal satisfaction derived by them from such beliefs. The man of science must rise to a higher level, he must make abstraction of the individual claim to happiness, and judge of a religious system according to its social capacities. Only when we invert the traditional point of view—only when, instead of seeking the value of a religion in its effects on our subjective personality, we seek it in the ability of that religion to fulfil its sociological function—only then can we hope to judge religion from a really objective point of view.

## CHAPTER III

### THE THEORY AND THE PRACTICE OF CHRISTIANITY

If it be permissible for theologians to endeavour to separate theory and practice in Christianity, to distinguish between the teaching of Jesus and the concrete applications of this teaching realised by the Church, such artificial distinctions are impossible when we undertake to study the sociological value of the Christian doctrine. The social effects of Christ's teaching could certainly not be expected to manifest themselves during the three short years of his ministry; neither can we expect to judge adequately of them during the four centuries of the primitive Church. Only when the Church was definitely victorious, only after the assembling of the Council of Nicea in 325, or even later, after the death of Theodosius in 395, could the seed sown by Jesus Christ, and which had germinated during nearly four hundred years, ripen to maturity. The social effects of Christianity must necessarily be judged according as they asserted themselves under the influence of a Christian *régime*, acting on an entirely Christianised society. Even as a tree can be judged only by its fruit, which develops after a certain period of growth; so can the sociological value of Christianity be judged only by the social results obtained through the working of institutions having attained to maturity, and possessing consequently sufficient vitality and sufficient force to enable them to show adequately all the capacity inherent to them.

For this reason we deem it better to speak, not so much of the sociological value of the gospel, as of the sociological value of Christianity. The social purport of the former could not be in any way guessed until the gospel had had the opportunity of being applied; and the application of the gospel teaching to society was only possible after the triumph of Christianity, after the Christianising of the peoples of Europe, after the consolidation of Christian institutions. It is a strange claim, that which is so often made, that we must go back to its first origins in order to be able to appreciate Christianity. We can, on the contrary, appreciate the value of Christian doctrine as far as it affects society, only when we see that doctrine applied to a considerable social aggregate, only when we are in a position to judge of its effects on a social body formed and moulded under the influence of Christian precepts and Christian ideals. It is just as reasonable to ask us to judge the sociological value of Christianity according to the sole teaching of Christ, without stopping to consider the concrete applications to society of the theories formulated in the gospel—as it would be to ask us to judge the intellectual value of a renowned philosopher or scientist by a simple analysis of the intellectual manifestations of his childhood. Most certainly does the organisation of the child condition and limit the intellectual capacity of the man; and the teaching of Christ, in a similar manner, conditions and limits the sociological capacities of the Church founded by him. But the capacity, in both cases, can manifest itself adequately only when, after a preliminary period of growth and development, the functions and structure have attained a certain degree of evolution permitting them, so to speak, to put forth their whole strength.

We must therefore, in effecting a survey of Christianity from the sociological point of view, complete the theories formulated in the gospel by the concrete application of these

theories to social conditions which was realised by the Church. If we find that the application of the gospel theories made by the Church was, on the whole, beneficial to society; then we may unhesitatingly say that the social value of Christianity has been duly proved.

Herbert Spencer very rightly observed that the great superstition of our time is the superstition of the divine right of parliaments. Had the illustrious philosopher analysed more closely the nature of this prevailing and highly mischievous superstition, he would have seen that it is but a derivation from the democratic idea as a whole, which can be resumed in the catchpenny phrase, "Government for the people, by the people." The infallible and sovereign people merely transfers its "divine rights" to a body of so-called representatives. And the democratic idea, in its turn, can only be based on, and only be justified by, the underlying idea of the equality of the individual component elements of the democracy. Once given the notion of equality, and the democratic system of government, the democratic organisation of the State, must be the necessary consequences.

Of all the popular superstitions current in our times, the superstition of equality is perhaps the most abhorrent to the man of science, and particularly to the biologist. The generality of the belief in the doctrine of equality—which latter is given us by shallow metaphysicians as a dogma *a priori*—is certainly not a guarantee of the objective value of that doctrine. As a matter of fact, and despite the efforts of certain University professors in France, no superstition is more profoundly incompatible with all the laws of nature, with all the facts accumulated by biological science. Nowhere do we see "equality" in Nature; we see, on the contrary, everywhere a fierce struggle for existence and a selection of the fittest, of those best adapted to environmental conditions. In the same way, we seek in vain for any traces of equality

in social life, if we except the lowest social aggregates, whose habitat is so situated as not to bring them into conflict with neighbouring tribes concerning the capture of prey, and whose power of expansion is limited to a *minimum*. Once we rise beyond the lowest level of culture, we find everywhere strife to be the foremost developmental factor in social evolution. The sociologist who has grasped the significance of the facts revealed by modern biology, and who can follow, throughout human history, the operation of the same great biological laws of strife and selection in all phases of social evolution—the sociologist will not suffer himself to be led astray by the fallacies of democratic teaching, will not bow down before the idols invented in the name of science to replace the gods, that this so-called "science" is supposed to have destroyed.

The apostles of equality, who are in general the relentless foes of "obscurantism" and "monkish superstition," being unable to justify their pet doctrine by an appeal to Nature and to real science, are frequently forced to fall back, in spite of themselves, on the very Christianity which they otherwise view with all the contempt begotten of the consciousness of immeasurable superiority. It has been the fate of Christianity, as it has been the fate of science, to see its name abused of, in order to lend support to the wildest phantasms and to the most grotesque aberrations of the human mind. Christianity has been the "justification" of Anabaptism, of Tolstoyism, of the "Peculiar People," of Mormonism, of hundreds of other weird sects. Science has been supposed to lend support to the fanatical anticlericalism of Latin countries, to the spoliation and brigandage organised by the French and Portuguese governments with regard to ecclesiastical property, to the ruthless expulsion of thousands of peaceful citizens on account of their religious belief. No reasonable person will, of course, render either Christianity or science responsible for the monstrous abuse made of their names and *prestige*—no reasonable person

will fall into the strange errors of logic of those who, blinded by hatred, seek to render the Catholic Church responsible for the butcheries of Alva in the Netherlands, for the massacre of Saint-Bartholomew, or for the corruption of the Court clergy at Versailles during the Regency and the reign of Louis XV. But it is not without use to examine the question of the attitude of Christianity towards the doctrine of equality; and we will see this attitude manifested by the teaching of Jesus, by the teaching of the Apostles, and by the teaching of the Church.

It is evident that, if Christianity should have, either in theory or in practice, preached or favoured in any way the doctrine of equality, its sociological value cannot fail to be gravely impaired by the fact of its having countenanced so dangerous a superstition. If the Jesus of Tolstoi be the real Jesus, if the Sermon on the Mount did indeed contain the antisocial teaching which the great Russian writer so much admired, then certainly was Jesus no sociologist, no social reformer, then certainly was he nothing but a misguided visionary, the victim of hallucinations that distorted his view of things and weakened his powers of reasoning. If the words, *Judge not, that ye be not judged,* are to be interpreted as Tolstoi interpreted them, as condemning all our notions of law and order, and as recommending absolute anarchy as the ideal state for society—then certainly need the sociologist waste but few words on Christianity, then indeed does the teaching of Jesus appear almost as something pathological, as revealatory of a diseased mind. How we are, under such circumstances, to explain the extraordinary diffusion, influence, and persistence of Christianity in the Western world, is a mystery which Tolstoi unfortunately neglected to unravel.

The Jesus of Tolstoi is but an exaggeration of the Jesus of democratic teaching in general. It is customary to represent Jesus as the democrat *par excellence,* as the preacher

of equality, as the apostle of universal peace and humanitarianism, as the forerunner of socialism if not of anarchism. It is customary to attribute to Jesus the paternity of all the sentimental fads that have been current since the eighteenth century. It is customary to justify the whole democratic and socialistic movement as a return to Jesus and to primitive Christianity. Mark the extraordinary, the disconcerting, assumptions of the argument which seeks to separate theory and practice in Christianity, to place the teaching of Jesus in antagonism to the entire development of the Christian doctrine and practice during nearly twenty centuries. In the first place, it is assumed that the whole of the immense movement which has resulted in the establishment of Western civilisation as we know it, has been nothing but a colossal aberration—that the whole process of social evolution in Europe during two thousand years represents nothing but one long error; in the second place, it is assumed that those forms of Christianity which have asserted and maintained themselves, are inferior to the forms that have been eliminated—that Catholicism, notably, is socially and morally inferior to the communistic heresies, such as Anabaptism, which have not survived; and especially inferior to the pure doctrine of Jesus which, we are told, it suppressed in order to build up doctrines diametrically opposed to that far superior and loftier teaching. Mark the extraordinary contradictions which these assumptions contain. Let us analyse the first assumption. If the Christianity of the Church be a distortion, a falsification, of the Christianity of Jesus, which latter responds alone to the real needs of society and of the individual; and if it be precisely the Christianity of the Church which has formed, moulded, and directed social evolution in Europe during many centuries; it follows obviously that social evolution has been very badly directed, that it has assumed forms antagonistic to social and individual welfare, that the gigantic task of the formation of

Western civilisation, which was carried out under the auspices of the Church from the fifth to the fifteenth century, constitutes an anomaly, an aberration, a work which should logically have destroyed Western civilisation instead of building it up. Examine now this strange theory in the light of knowledge and in the light of reason. We know that, in the realm of nature, the survival of an organism, the persistence of a species, is a proof of the fact that they are adapted to surrounding conditions, that they are in harmony with their environment. If the environment is modified, the vitality of the species is put to a test: the persistence of the species will only be assured if its members, or some of them, present functional and organic variations that respond to the needs of the species as regards the modified environment. Such variations will be "selected," in that the individuals possessing them, being in a more favourable posture as regards the new conditions of life, will survive and reproduce themselves at the expense of those who, not possessing these variations, are in an inferior posture. In other words, everywhere we find "inferior" individuals and "inferior" species eliminated under the pressure of the constant struggle for existence. Similar conditions prevail in social life. The only reason we can possibly assign for the elimination of societies once great, for the destruction of civilisations once flourishing, is that they became "inferior," and had to make room for "superior" societies and "superior" civilisations. The developmental forces at work in the shaping of the eliminated, and consequently inferior, societies, were not instrumental in securing survival, did not therefore respond to the needs of those societies.

Such are the facts, facts known to every biologist, and which can be verified by any student of history. How do they adapt themselves to the assumption under analysis? According to that assumption, on the contrary, the develop-

mental forces at work in the shaping of Western society, although not responding to the needs of that society, and therefore not instrumental in securing its survival, far from being fatal to social existence, built up and consolidated the very society to the needs of which they did not respond! Can we imagine a more flagrant contradiction than that implied by the terms of this proposition? If Western society was built up, moulded, and consolidated by the Christian Church, it ensues obviously that the latter, in that it was eminently instrumental in securing survival, responded fully to the fundamental needs of Western society.

This brings us to the second assumption, according to which the Christianity of the Church, which survived, was inferior to the Christianity of Jesus, which was eliminated. Theories and doctrines, in a word ideas, are powerful factors in social evolution; and they are as rigorously subjected to the laws of conflict and survival as is everything else in the world of phenomena, for these laws apply to the moral as well as to the physical world. Those theories, those doctrines, which are instrumental in furthering social survival and development—in other words, those ideas which we term fruitful—will themselves survive; they will gradually assert themselves in spite of all obstacles. A fruitful idea sent forth into the world is like unto the grain of seed which the hand of the sower flings to the mother earth; after remaining for a time invisible, it will appear and shoot forth, and the grain will develop into the plant, and the plant will become the tree, the shade of which extends further with every year that passes. But a fruitless idea, an idea which responds to no social needs, will not develop; it is like unto the grain of seed sowed upon a rock. Accordingly to the assumption under analysis, the fruitful idea of Jesus, which responded to the needs of society, remained barren and had no development; whereas the idea of the Church, idea that in no wise furthered

social interests, prospered and flourished. It is not necessary to point out the contradiction implied by this strange theory, which we nevertheless so frequently hear propounded.

All this brings us back once more to what we said in the first chapter. Whether the view be taken that Christianity in general be a negligible factor in social evolution, that Christianity in general has exerted practically no influence on the formation and development of Western civilisation; or whether the view be taken that Church Christianity in particular has exerted a noxious and evil influence on social evolution—in both cases the diffusion and remarkable persistence of Christianity, which has persisted precisely under the form of what we may term Church Christianity, remain enshrouded in a veil of impenetrable mystery, and can only be explained as the effect of a miracle. If Christianity be destitute of sociological value and bereft of sociological importance, what is the meaning of its diffusion and persistence? If the form under which Christianity has asserted itself be a distorted form and hostile to the real interests of society, why should precisely this distorted form have asserted itself victoriously and persisted? Such is the dilemma to which partisans of either theory are reduced. And the only way out of the dilemma is to suppose social evolution to be absolutely arbitrary, to be the result of chance and haphazard, to be a chaotic and incomprehensible process. If, however, we accept the idea of social evolution as determined by fixed and unchangeable laws, in the same way as any other order of phenomena in the natural world is determined, the theories in question become quite untenable. It is curious to observe that those who, in general, insist most strongly on the notion of natural law, and seek thereby to shake the foundations of supernatural belief, are often those who ignore absolutely the working of natural law in social evolution.

It is to this ignorance of the working of immutable social

laws that we must attribute the popular belief that social evolution is a thing of choice, that society can be re-cast and re-formed at will, according to the likes and desires of legislators and would-be social "reformers." To those who ignore social laws, the idea of the fruitful teaching of Jesus remaining barren, or of the noxious teaching of the Church prospering and developing, has nothing surprising in it. By such as these, the idea of an indissoluble link existing between the society of the Middle Ages and the society of to-day is entirely ignored. The fact is that these persons, who constitute unfortunately the majority, are wholly ignorant of the rudiments of social philosophy. They are ignorant of the fact that heredity and selection constitute fundamental laws of social existence, just as much as the same factors determine the life of biological species and organisms. They know not that every society is the offspring of heredity, that in its past history lies its indispensable vital patrimony. They know not that the fundamental life conditions of all societies remain invariably the same—that these life conditions cannot be modified at will—that if these life conditions are tampered with, the continuity of social existence is thereby imperilled—that the modifications of which a society is susceptible, are strictly limited by such fundamental life conditions. Hence the belief that the evolution which has formed Western civilisation as we know it is a false one—that the past is a long error to be got rid of as speedily as possible. Hence the belief that it is possible, as we expressed it, to separate theory and practice in Christianity—that, if the practice has been bad, it is only necessary to resuscitate the theory. And, as we said, the question is never put as to why an inherently excellent theory should have remained barren during twenty centuries—should have been supplanted by a false theory which has "corrupted" and misled society during all these centuries of its evolution. The question is not necessary if

we suppose social evolution to be a merely arbitrary process, a mere thing of choice, the product of chance and chaos and haphazard.

It was a momentous epoch in the world's history, that at which Jesus of Nazareth made his appearance. The decomposition of Western society was so far advanced that a powerful impulsion—an exceptionally powerful impulsion—was indispensable in order to save it from total disruption and annihilation. At such a period of decomposition and ferment, new and original ideas cannot but have possessed unusual force. Noxious ideas can only spread in a decayed society, such as was Roman society at the time of Tiberius. And when degeneracy has prepared the ground for them, such noxious ideas will spread with rapidity, hastening the process of social decay and disintegration; for at such periods the dissolving power of antisocial ideas is great. Fruitful ideas, on the other hand—ideas which respond to the permanent and universal needs of social existence—must possess a rare vitality, a rare strength, if under such adverse circumstances they are to arrest the downward movement of society, prevent the irremediable decadence of the biological value of the race, assert themselves despite the degeneracy already manifest, which it is their difficult task to stem. Concerning the teaching of Jesus, it is clear to any one who has the least respect for historical facts, that this teaching had an immediate and extraordinary success. If it was a teaching that contained antisocial ideas, its dissolving power must have been immense; it must inevitably have brought about the definite fall of Western society, which would have shared the fate of the Roman empire; it must inevitably have proved a most powerful stimulant of the movement of decomposition and degeneracy visible at the time of its introduction. If, on the contrary, the teaching of Jesus contained ideas which responded to the permanent needs of society, which afforded an adequate basis

whereon to reconstruct a degenerate and dying society, its diffusion must inevitably have resulted in such a reconstruction and reorganisation of the social fabric. And we find, effectively, that the spread of Christianity, the consolidation of Christian institutions, coincided with the saving of Western society from annihilation and with the rebuilding of that society.

But, we are told, the Christianity which thus spread, which thus asserted itself, was not the Christianity of Jesus; it was but a distortion, or, if we prefer, an inferior edition of the Christianity of Jesus. In the first place, as we have already observed, to maintain that an inferior doctrine—especially in so peculiarly critical a time—could supplant and suppress a superior one, without leading to social bankruptcy and annihilation unless arrested in time in its turn, is to ignore all the conditions under which social evolution takes place. As the Christianity which spread and diffused itself led, not to social bankruptcy, but to social reconstruction and regeneration, we may regard it as containing the ideas adapted to social needs, as being—from a sociological point of view—the true and sound Christianity, as constituting, if it should indeed differ from the Christianity of Jesus, the superior form of Christianity. In the second place, if the Christianity which spread and diffused itself was not the Christianity of Jesus, we may well ask: What was, then, its origin? What other personality, what other currents of thought, can have given rise to it? When did it originate?

If we regard the Christianity of the Church as being fundamentally and essentially identical with the Christianity of Jesus, the questions alike of the origin of the former, and of the reason of its diffusion, are solved. The fruitful ideas propounded by Jesus spread and asserted themselves by reason of their extraordinary vitality; they possessed force enough to stem the tide of degeneracy, to arrest the decay of Western

society, to reconstruct and reorganise the latter on the basis of those immutable principles that constitute the foundation of all social existence. In this case, the Christianity of the Church derived its strength and influence from the ideas sown by Jesus, which ideas it incorporated and permitted to manifest themselves, to bear fruit a thousandfold. If, on the other hand, we regard the Christianity of the Church as differing essentially from the Christianity of Jesus, then we must regard the former, in view of the results achieved by it, as being incontestably superior to the latter. If we hold to that view, the difficulty of the origins of this superior Christianity remains; and this problem appears truly, if we accept the theory in question, as wellnigh insoluble, if not as altogether insoluble.

When we come, however, to view the facts more closely, such a theory cannot but appear in the light of a wholly gratuitous assumption. If we take the first centuries of Christianity, how was it possible that these centuries, standing as they did directly under the influence of Jesus and of his teaching, can nevertheless have followed with such remarkable unanimity and persistence a teaching essentially different to that of the Master? To suppose all the Christian communities of the first centuries capable of such an aberration, capable of distorting, nay of inverting, the teaching of the same Jesus for whom Christians were prepared joyfully to sacrifice their lives and to endure every torture—to suppose this not only appears entirely gratuitous, but is equivalent to affirming that the whole of the Christian world of those times was afflicted with a mental malady, with a psychological disease, of the existence of which we have not the shadow of any evidence. If, therefore, Jesus did indeed preach the doctrines of anarchy and communism, for instance, why should the tenets and the arganisation of the Christian communities not have been of on anarchistic and communistic nature? And yet the tenets

and the organisation of the Church of the first centuries were neither of an anarchistic nor—if we except the Church of the Catacombs—of a communistic nature. If the earliest Christians lived under a *régime* of communism, this cannot be taken as signifying that the doctrine of the primitive Church made communism a necessity. In the first stages of an organisation, exceptional solidarity between the members is indispensable from a practical point of view. The communism of the earliest Christians responded to the consciousness they had of this necessity, and also to the desire to insist with especial force on the duty of earnestness, of combating the dominant tendency of the times to regard the satisfaction of material cravings as the one goal of life.

It is, again, as we have already said, impossible to consider the social organisation of the early Christians as reflecting the whole of the social teaching contained in the message of Jesus. How could the elementary organisation of the early Christians manifest all the sociological capacities of the doctrine? Unrelentlessly persecuted, compelled to conceal themselves, to seek the obscurity of the catacombs in order to be free to pray and accomplish their religious duties, a little community surrounded by bitter foes—how could the early Christian Church represent anything more than the first humble germ of the gospel seed? We could as well have expected the early colonisers of North America, gathered behind the palisades of their first settlements, to manifest all the social genius of which the Americans of the States and of Canada have since proved themselves capable. Only gradually, as the new religion spread and conquered ground, could it reveal the capacities latent in it, capacities that finally expanded, that finally manifested themselves in their full strength and bloom, after the definite triumph of Christianity at the beginning of the fifth century.

We have said, and we insist again on the fact, that it is

in the past history of an organism, whether biological or social, that lies its indispensable vital patrimony. If this be the case, the vitality of the later Church, the immense social force and social influence of the Church of the Middle Ages, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, must have its roots embedded in the past history of that Church, must have been derived from the vitality, from the latent force and power, of the earlier Church, of the Church of the first four centuries; just as the vitality and force of the States and of Canada have their roots in the past history of those great countries, in the latent force and power of the early colonisers, of primitive institutions; and just as the vitality and force of any nation are derived from the vitality and force of its early ancestors, of its early institutions. The marvellous adaptation of the early Church to social needs and wants is the secret of the vitality of that Church, of its triumph; and the adaptation of the later Church to social needs is the secret, in turn, of the extraordinary vitality manifested by it during a thousand years. The early Church, the Church of the first four centuries, had saved Western society from annihilation; and to the later Church was left the not less difficult task of consolidating a society still bleeding from its wounds, torn by war and strife, without adequate institutions and without authority—a society still quivering from the shock of the tremendous upheavals caused by the invasion of the barbarians and the downfall of the Roman Empire. The social force of Christianity had been put to a severe test during the four hundred years that followed the coming of Jesus; and the work accomplished by it, although already immense, had been but the preamble of the herculean task still awaiting it, of the task of reconstructing and reorganising society on the foundations laid by the earlier Church. If the early Church had been possessed of an extraordinary power of adaptation to social necessities, it was imperative that the later Church

should possess a similar power not one whit inferior. That this was the case, is proved by the work accomplished by the Church during the thousand years that lasted the Middle Ages.

From a sociological point of view, it is quite impossible to draw any distinction between the earlier and the later Church, between the Church of the first four centuries and the Church of the Middle Ages. Western society had been saved from annihilation by the immense effort of the early Church, and the early Church had laid the foundations for its reconstruction and reorganisation. Had the Church of the Middle Ages not continued the task begun by the early Church, not carried into the domain of concrete practice and application the principles laid down by the latter, Western society would have quickly sunk back again into the lowest forms of barbarism, its decomposition, arrested for a time, would have recommenced and would have progressed with rapid strides. The fact that Western society was reconstructed and reorganised, regenerated and consolidated, by the ceaseless efforts of the Church of the Middle Ages, is the proof that the Church of the Middle Ages continued the work of social redemption and healing begun by the early Church; unless, indeed, it can be pretended that the treatment prescribed in order to attain convalescence and ultimate perfect health, is based on radically different principles to the treatment prescribed in order to rescue the patient from imminent death. Western society had been saved from imminent death by early Christianity. The same society, having the same needs, placed amidst the same fundamental environmental conditions, could only hope to evolve normally, to attain eventual health and strength, on condition that the same needs be attended to, that its power of adaptation to the same environment be constantly developed. It is clear that if Western society evolved normally, if it was reorganised and consolidated by the efforts of the later Church, it can only have been due to the later Church having

continued the treatment commenced by the earlier Church. It is obvious that the same society, having the same needs, placed amidst the same fundamental environmental conditions, could not be saved by one method, fortified and developed by another and contrary method.

## CHAPTER IV

### FRATERNITY *VERSUS* EQUALITY

### I

THE secret of the success which has attended the preaching of the doctrine of equality among the masses of Western Europe, lies in the fact that the notion of equality must necessarily flatter the fundamental egotistical interests of the individual, always unwilling to admit his inferiority. Equality is thus the god of egotism. Especially among the overwhelming number of those who are really and hopelessly inferior, who cannot succeed, cannot rise beyond their original level, because they do not possess the indispensable qualities which make for success—especially among such as these, do we find the most fervent disciples of the idea of equality. Equality is balm for the weak and inferior, naturally envious of those who possess the qualities, and who consequently reap the success, which will always remain unknown to the inferior. The idea of equality is, transported into the political sphere, but the means whereby the envy and spite of the inferior may give free vent to themselves, and wreak vengeance on the superior few, who must invariably be an object of hatred on the part of those who are beneath them. Whether the masses be conscious or not conscious of their inferiority, the sentiment of being inferior *in fact* will always engender corresponding sentiments of envy and hatred—

unless, indeed, these natural sentiments be restrained by a powerful and efficacious moral discipline. Under the specious plea of obtaining justice, it is proposed by "equalitarians" to perpetrate the most evident injustice, in that it is proposed to despoil the superior of the rights they have conquered by reason of their superiority.

If any one doubt of the support lent by the egotistical sentiments of envy and hatred to the idea of equality, he has only to analyse the psychological forces underlying the socialistic and revolutionary movement of our times. The mentality of the masses is not a complicated one; especially is this mentality incapable of grasping abstract notions. To suppose the masses capable of waxing enthusiastic on account of a mere vague, shadowy, and abstract idea of justice, is to ignore entirely the psychology of the masses. For the latter, the idea of justice is inseparable from the idea of the satisfaction of egotistical interests. What excites the enthusiasm of the masses is not an idea of abstract justice, but the prospect of being able, once the *Zukunftsstaat* of socialism has been realised, to work the least possible for the most possible remuneration; and the idea of remuneration, in its turn, is inseparable from the idea of individual pleasure. Not without reason has socialism established its doctrines on a materialistic basis; for a materialistic doctrine will always find the most adherents among the ignorant and half-educated. To do it justice, socialism has never concealed, or attempted to conceal, the fact that it appeals to egotistical interests. The whole theory of the class-war derived from Karl Marx—what is it if not a frank appeal to the proletarian class to battle exclusively for the conquest of so-called proletarian rights? True, the theorists of socialism declare that the war of the classes must inevitably lead to the reconciliation of the classes—that the victorious assertion of the exclusive rights of the proletariat

implies *ipso facto* the assertion of the rights of those who do not belong to the proletariat, seeing that the interests of the proletariat are synonymous with the interests of society as a whole. But, as M. Alfred Fouillée has very justly pointed out, no one outside the privileged group of socialist theorists and metaphysicians has ever been able to understand anything of this most extraordinary theory—can understand how the bitterest warfare, terminated by general confiscation and spoliation, can engender peace and harmony and fraternal reconciliation—can understand how the interests of a single one of the warring classes can be rendered synonymous with the interests of the whole society. Least of all, we may be quite sure, have the logomachies of Marx been understood of the masses enrolled under the red flag of the revolution. The masses care not one straw for theories; what they alone understand is action. When M. Paul Lafargue, the son-in-law of Marx and one of the pontiffs of French socialism, tells the masses that their aim should be to work as little as possible and to amuse themselves as much as possible, *bombancer la moitié de la journée et toute la nuit* as this contemporary moralist candidly recommends as the highest goal of life, we may be certain that his teaching is understood. For this teaching is perfectly adapted to the mentality of those whom M. Lafargue, the lay preacher of future morality, has undertaken to catechise.

The simple prelogical nature of the mentality of the masses, which can only grasp the visible and the concrete, which understands therefore only action and not theory, and which confounds—by reason of a psychological deficiency that prevents it from distinguishing adequately between cause and effect, from differentiating between heterogeneous categories of concepts and phenomena—the action with the results to be obtained by it: this mentality was well illustrated by the demonstrations which took place in Paris on the evening of October 10, 1909, when the execution of the Spanish agitator

Ferrer became known. Not one tenth part of the forty thousand demonstrators who gathered to "protest in the name of justice," had ever heard of Ferrer. They came, none the less, in response to the invitation of socialist and revolutionary newspapers; and they "protested" against the "judicial assassination" of a man they had never heard of, by tearing up the pavements, by burning the public benches and the public lavatories, by smashing windows, by shooting an unfortunate policeman who could hardly be rendered responsible for the death of Ferrer. Such is the only method of protestation known to the multitude—violence. They can conceive a violent protestation that degenerates into tumult and riot, because such a protestation is realised by immediate and violent action. And the Paris demonstrators undoubtedly believed that the action of tearing up stones, extinguishing street-lamps, burning public property, effectively avenged Ferrer. The action was confounded with the result, because action and result are, for this mentality, one and the same thing, because the mystical properties supposed inherent to the action are such as to produce, mechanically and *ipso facto*, the result desired.

We have mentioned the case of the Ferrer demonstrations in Paris as illustrative of the workings of the prelogical mentality of the masses. This mentality, as we have said, is radically incapable of grasping abstract notions. It cares nothing for the metaphysical justifications of equality invented by Rousseau, and repeated by the revolutionary metaphysicians of 1789 and 1792. If we go to a political meeting of working-men, and listen to the arguments propounded by simple minds, we shall very soon observe that the hope of equality, the longing for equality, is by no means based on the lofty principles which interested flatterers of mob-passion would make us believe dominate the mental life of the masses. And when we hear the gospel of equality preached in a gin-

tavern by gin-sodden orators, in an atmosphere reeking of drink, to the accompaniment of foul oaths, coarse blasphemies, and cheap invectives; we shall have a different idea of the loftiness of the principles underlying this gospel. We shall then understand better that equality, for the masses, has but a very slender connection with notions of justice—that the idea of equality is here based on the vilest passions, on the blind hatred of inferior beings for superiority of every sort, whether superiority of wealth or superiority of morals. The theorists who, in the calm of their studies, preach the gospel of equality and seek to base it on all kinds of empty catch-words, have perhaps themselves no idea that their high-sounding doctrines act on the masses only as a ferment, as a ferment of hatred and destruction which, in order to satisfy blind envy and spite, is capable of destroying, by one felon stroke, all the multifarious acquisitions of civilisation obtained by long centuries of patient labour. For what importance, for the masses thus excited and let loose, have the purest monuments of the human genius, when weighed in the balance with the prospect of satisfying freely animal lusts and passions?

And the intellectuals, who preach the theory of equality without stopping to consider the effects of their theory on the popular mentality, without stopping to consider the concrete applications of the theory by the masses—for the masses care only about such concrete applications: what of them? It would be interesting and instructive to have a detailed study of the psychology of the representatives of intellect—and by representatives of intellect we by no means understand solely university teachers. Such a study would show us that probably among no category of persons do we find as much vanity and as much egotism as among the category classed as "intellectuals." This vanity and this egotism are engendered by a system of education which is impregnated by the idea that science is the main lever, if not

the exclusive lever, of social evolution—and that therefore the prophets of science are necessarily the salt of the earth, the pioneers and creators of civilisation. Into the boy and into the youth this idea is drilled; and when the youth has conquered the coveted diploma, goal of his ambitions, is it extraordinary that he should consider himself as a being apart, as the rightful leader of society? But in our present state of civilisation, with the overcrowding of the liberal professions, with the frenzied run on diplomas of every kind and description, it very frequently happens that the young man, taught invariably to consider himself as the salt of the earth, finds his diploma to be of no value whatever to him in the struggle for existence. He has hitherto lived aloof from real life, shut up more or less in an ivory tower; he has crammed sufficient knowledge into his brain to enable him to pass his examinations, but nothing more; he has no originality, no personal gifts, his mediocrity is palpable, but of this he has of course no conception; he is, on the contrary, swollen with vanity, having been nourished exclusively on egotism. And now he finds that all his vaunted knowledge has no material value, that instead of the world being at his feet, the world has no need of him, for he is ill adapted to the world's necessities. Misery frequently awaits him, bitter disappointment and disillusion always. What can be the result? Disappointed ambition, mortified vanity, will make of the young *intellectuel* a revolutionary. Having nothing to lose by the revolution, and possibly much to gain by it, he will not for one instant pause to consider the interests of society, of civilisation. Society has wounded his vanity and is henceforth his enemy. Mortified vanity will make of him a preacher of equality. But this equality, he preaches it in order to degrade those who are superior to him, who have succeeded in the struggle which has vanquished him, and not in order to elevate those who are beneath him.

And so it is with the majority of "intellectuals," even with those who have succeeded and proved thereby their value. Equality, for them, is a weapon directed against those who, not being "intellectuals," exercise the authority in society—against all those who, whether by reason of their wealth, or by reason of their talents, or by any other reason, are possessed of greater influence, of greater power. In advocating equality, they look towards those above, not towards those below. To the *savant* the masses are indifferent, if they are not positively repugnant. He looks down on them with contempt, conscious of the unfathomable gulf that separates him from them. He generally ignores altogether the effects of "equalitarian" teaching on the masses, or else he underestimates the importance of the latter; he does not believe in the possibility of a "proletarian revolution" which might very possibly submerge the class of *savants* as much as any other class. Equality is for him an instrument by means of which he may ascend to the top of the social hierarchy; for his ideal is that of a society ruled by "intellect," guided and directed by philosophers and by the priests of science.

Whether among the "intellectuals" or among the masses, we find the doctrine of equality to be a mere cloak for egotism. Equality is a doctrine preached almost invariably with a view to satisfying interests of an essentially egotistical nature, whether individual interests or class interests. Such egotism need not necessarily be conscious egotism; but only in the rarest cases do we find the preachers of equality to be absolutely disinterested. For the masses, equality signifies the suppression of the authority which has hitherto held the *plebs* in check, which has hitherto held popular passion in check. When, in obedience to the theory of equality, all curb on popular passion has been removed, we shall see the long pent-up cravings and desires of the *plebs* burst forth like a roaring cataract that has swept away the dykes—and this

cataract will submerge Western civilisation for good. The equality preached by *savants* who choose to ignore the facts of biology and of human history, acts, as we have said, as a ferment on the masses, whose mentality cannot grasp abstract notions, and which are always impelled, by reason of this mentality, to action, because action is concrete. The masses see the glittering riches of this world dazzled before their eyes, offered to them as compensation for centuries of "toil and oppression"; and they long to seize them, because these riches will enable them to satisfy all their desires, enable them to live in luxury and in idleness. When we have swept away the cobweb of revolutionary verbiage, what other ideals do they possess, these masses whom we see around us, excited by the lust of hate, lured by the hope of ample booty, a menace to the future of Western civilisation? The masses, detached from the old religious beliefs and from the moral restraints which these beliefs imposed, taught to regard the satisfaction of material cravings, the conquest of material ease and wealth, as the sole aim of life, taught to regard all "possessors" as thieves whom it is legitimate to despoil at will, taught to consider themselves as the only rightful claimants to the social wealth accumulated by past centuries, taught that there is nothing beyond this life and that in this life the only thing of value is pleasure, unlimited pleasure—what other ideal can the masses have, than that of grabbing as much of the world's wealth as possible, so as to be able to satisfy therewith all their instincts and desires? Equality, translated into the language of the masses, is simply: *Ôte-toi de là que je m'y mette.*

Mark, now, that the doctrine of equality implies always and necessarily the correlative notion of the superiority of those who aspire after equality. The socialistic theory of equality is, in this respect, far more candid than the liberal theory. Socialism says quite frankly to the proletariat: do

battle for *your* interests, conquer *your* interests, seize the power for yourselves, and establish *your* dictature. Were there not so many contradictions in the socialist theory, one might be astonished at the manifest contradiction which arises between the notion of equality, on which socialism is ostensibly based, and the notion of the dictature of the proletariat. For the proletariat can only establish such a dictature at the expense of the other social classes; such a dictature implies obviously the tyrannising of all the other social classes by the proletarian dictators, the subordination, nay the annihilation, of the legitimate interests of all the other classes, in order that the exclusive interests of the one proletarian class may be furthered. What becomes, in all this, of the doctrine of equality? For it is quite evident that the idea of equality is absolutely incompatible with the idea of a class dictature. If a class dictature be established, then are the other classes not equal to the dictator class, then are the other classes necessarily inferior, they will be ruled by the dictator in the interest of the latter, and their own interests will be unhesitatingly and ruthlessly sacrificed.

Instead of the empty catchword of liberal political metaphysics: "Government for the people, by the people," socialism formulates the doctrine of "government for the proletariat, by the proletariat." The socialist formula is clear, and there is no ambiguity about it. The proletariat is to strive to conquer exclusively proletarian rights, to establish an exclusively proletarian dictature; the other social classes have no right to existence, no account shall be taken of their interests, they must be mercilessly exterminated. We understand the message of socialism very clearly; what we do not understand is that socialist theorists should talk about equality, seeing that socialism denies absolutely and categorically the rights of every social class other than the proletariat.

At the basis of the demand so frequently made by certain

"intellectuals" for equality, we shall find the same pretensions to superiority and to dictature, if we come to analyse more closely the psychological foundations of their claim. If certain "intellectuals" claim equality with insistence, it is not because they consider themselves "equal" to a crossing-sweeper or to an agricultural labourer, any more than they consider those who have the government of society in their hands, as "equal" to the representatives of intellect. The late Ferdinand Brunetière, than whom no one was better qualified to speak as a representative of intellect, pointed out very justly, in a celebrated article of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, that the intellectual class is frequently given to over-estimation of its power, over-estimation due to excessive egotism and overweening vanity. The man of science, into whom the idea has been drilled since boyhood that science is infallible and that its priests partake of this character of infallibility, very often imagines, in all sincerity, that because he is an expert in his special line, whether it be mathematics, or astronomy, or physics, or chemistry, or biology, he is therefore *ipso facto* an expert on any and every other subject under the sun; that in regard to literature, or to wireless telegraphy, or to aviation, or to politics, he is guided by some mysterious higher light, there where other unfortunate mortals are hopelessly groping in the dark. This mentality of the man of science was well manifested in France during the Dreyfus case. We were then treated to the spectacle of *savants*, doubtless distinguished in their respective branches, seriously claiming to be able to appreciate the facts of the case better than the officers of the two courts-martial who condemned Dreyfus for high treason and felony. And this astonishing claim was based on the supposition that laboratory work, or the hunting after dusty parchments in a library, render those who busy themselves with such things infallible in all matters, whether connected with their speciality or not.

The not very dignified spectacle to which we were treated by these erudite defenders of Dreyfus proved, unfortunately, that the laborious acquisition of learning frequently engenders incurable myopia with regard to all phenomena situated outside the sphere of one's daily activities.

The part played by certain *savants* in the miserable Dreyfus agitation was symptomatic of the mentality of a large number of representatives of intellect. As Brunetière very truly observed, these *savants* looked down with unconcealed contempt on the officers of the army; they even lent, without any scruples of conscience, their aid and support to the vilest campaign of calumny directed against the army, and especially against the *galonnés*. When we come to seek for the reason of the contempt so unsparingly manifested, we find it to lie in the overweening vanity of men who, nourished from youth with the idea that science and its prophets are infallible, imagine that when a *savant* expresses an opinion on any subject, no other course is left open to any one but to acquiesce. Contradiction sets men of this stamp into fury; disagreement with their opinion appears to them in the light of a personal injury. Hence the intense hatred of certain French *savants* for French officers, hence the unmitigated contempt of the same *savants* for the army. Their vanity was mortified because the French army and the French nation would not believe, on the strength of the simple affirmation of men who had not the remotest connection with the business, that all the officers of the General Staff were perjurers and forgers.

When, therefore, we find representatives of intellect claiming equality and preaching equality, we must not be under any illusions as to their humility. Equality, as we have already observed, is for them an instrument whereby they may ascend to the top of the social ladder and direct actively the whole course of social evolution. We must not imagine that the representatives of intellect would willingly submit to a

proletarian dictature, or consent to be placed on an equal footing with mere working-men. Let us hasten to add that it would be highly unnatural for them to consent to be so placed. The truth is that representatives of intellect, like any one else, have their opinions concerning what measures are beneficial, and what measures are not beneficial, to society—concerning what measures tend to further, and what measures tend to obstruct, social progress. Only the representative of intellect tends too frequently to suppose his opinion to be a more or less infallible expression of the truth—to overlook the fact that erudition in one branch does not qualify necessarily its possessor in other branches. As the course pursued by a given social policy does not always please the representatives of intellect; as practical politicians, having to consider the realities of concrete facts and to adjust their efforts to possibilities, are often compelled to neglect the ambitious schemes of social regeneration propounded by learned theorists; the latter, convinced of their immeasurable superiority, question impatiently the right of such politicians to thus neglect theories which are the fruit of so large an expenditure of erudition. They consider themselves unjustly relegated to what they conceive to be an inferior position, and they therefore loudly claim equality—which signifies for them the right to direct the social movement according to their theories, the right for them to impose their theories, regardless as to whether such theories take account of the possibilities of the situation.

When we come to analyse the psychological foundations of the doctrine of equality, we thus find that doctrine to be, whether consciously or unconsciously, a mere cloak for the satisfaction of egotistical interests. The demand for equality is inspired by egotism. The masses wish for "equality" in order to be able to satisfy without restraint all the desires and all the passions which have up till now been curbed, more or less adequately,

in the interests of society, by the influence of authority. The representatives of intellect aspire after "equality," but only as regards those at the summit of the social hierarchy, only as a means of obtaining for themselves the active direction of social evolution. On the one hand and on the other, the demand for equality is not founded on a sentiment of humility. With the masses it is founded on the lust of hate, on the desire to satisfy material cravings and the animal instincts; and with the intellectual class it is founded on overweening vanity.

## II

A very different doctrine from the doctrine which is based either—as in the case of the masses—on envy and spite, on hatred and the craving for purely material satisfactions, or—as in the case of representatives of the intellectual class—on egotism and vanity, is the doctrine of fraternity presented to us by Christianity. And, if the psychological motives inspiring the demand for equality be all of them derived from egotism, whether class egotism or individual egotism, is it not obvious that these motives are the diametrical opposite of those which inspired the teaching of Jesus Christ, of whom we read that *bajulans sibi crucem exivit*?

And when we assist at a meeting organised by the revolutionaries of to-day; when we witness the extraordinary mixture of crass ignorance and boundless vanity in the overstrung brains of both orators and hearers; when we see the savage hatred manifested against every kind of superiority; when we listen to the threats and appeals to violence, which show us the amount of justice and liberty we may expect when these enemies of civilisation have the reins of power in their hands, to the blasphemous insults levelled against everything which has been held sacred by Western society; when we see

around us, amidst the atmosphere of coarse invective, flash the lurid light of the social revolution—when we see, by anticipation, the day when, all the barricades having been destroyed, the masses will be able to pillage and loot and sack, able to give vent to all their pent-up passions, able to satisfy all their animal instincts and cravings; then can we grasp the measureless difference between this gospel of egotism, of hatred, of materialism, and the gospel of fraternity, of solidarity, of humility, of love, preached by Jesus Christ.

Measure—nay, we cannot measure the difference! The masses vaguely understand it—understand that Christianity is the chief obstacle to the social revolution. And the first object of the hatred of the masses is Christianity.

The Christian doctrine of fraternity applies with equal force to all classes of society. Based as it is on the underlying idea of humility, it reminds high and low, the powerful and the weak, of their duties — of the supreme duty of solidarity. All men are brothers — but all men are not equal: such is the truth contained in the gospel message. And a profound truth it is. All men are brothers who work, who contribute, each according to his abilities, each in his sphere of life, to the great collective task of humanity; and every worker has the right to be respected for his work, besides the duty of respecting others for theirs. But the objective, social value of the different categories of work is not the same—the various categories of work cannot all be reduced to a common level, for the creation of their heterogeneous products demands heterogeneity of effort and heterogeneity of capacity. Yet each individual, however small the effort allowed to him by his limited capacity, possesses, by reason of his work, an inalienable subjective value—a value which, not being of a social but of a moral nature, cannot be measured in the terms of a social evaluation, but which can be appreciated only according to a moral standard.

The doctrine of fraternity is based on the necessity of individual humility. "To know how to command, and to know how to obey," said Nietzsche, the bitter foe of Christianity, "both are essential to real greatness." Nietzsche failed to see that this magnificent doctrine, so profoundly true, is also the doctrine of the Christianity he detested—a doctrine illustrated by the whole life of Jesus. Jesus knew how to command: "he spoke with authority," we are told by his biographer. And Jesus knew how to obey; he knew full well how to practise that most difficult of all human virtues because it is the most galling of all to human egotism and pride—the virtue of obedience. *Et erat subditus illis*, we read. As in his childhood he was obedient to his parents, so all through life was he obedient to a great and noble ideal, to what he believed to be the command of his Father in heaven—obedient to that ideal, to that command, to the point of laying down his life for it. The life of Jesus is admirably summed up in the beautiful words of St. Philip: *Humiliavit semetipsum factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.* Obedient in his childhood, obedient in his manhood, obedient in his death, Jesus is an example to the world for all time of the humility that constitutes the foundation of fraternity. He, who was the loftiest, humiliated himself and made himself obedient unto death, unto the death of the cross.

The message of Jesus is thus not only a message for the masses; it is also a message for the more highly placed, for those who exercise authority and who command. In the vastness of its scope, the message of Jesus embraced all classes of society; and therein lies the secret of its force, therein lies its incommensurable sociological value. It is for having neglected the truths contained in it, that those who exercise authority have seen their authority diminish and decay. They have, in a large measure, failed in their duty of fraternity, failed to recognise the necessity of that solidarity which is

indispensable to social cohesion and integration. The non-recognition, in the higher spheres of society, of the duty of solidarity, has had its inevitable repercussion in a slackening of the bonds of social solidarity in the lower spheres. Had the governing classes in France in the eighteenth century been conscious of their duty, conscious of their essential solidarity with the classes governed—then would not misgovernment and tyranny have engendered the formidable outburst of the Revolution. And had the governing classes in Europe generally, during the nineteenth century, been conscious of their duty towards the masses, conscious of the duty imposed on them by the great law of fraternity—then would we not have to fear to-day the imminent danger of a yet more terrible and far-reaching revolution. Too long have the governing classes ignored the duty of fraternity, ignored the necessity of solidarity. Having fortified themselves behind the pallisades of class egotism, given themselves up to the pursuit of egotistical aims, shut their ears to the cry of the masses for more justice—can the governing class wonder now if their authority is gone, if they are an object of hatred instead of respect; can they wonder if their appeals fall on deaf ears, if their promises excite nothing but defiance and suspicion, seeing that they were deaf so long to the appeals of others, seeing that, when asked to give bread, they only gave stones?

*Omnis qui se exaltat, humiliabitur; et qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.* The *bourgeoisie,* whose reign, stained by blood, by oppression, by mammonolatry, is drawing to an end, will learn by bitter experience the truth of these words, even as the old monarchy of France learned it. Applied to social conditions, these words signify that the government whose policy is founded on egotism, and which neglects its duties towards those it is supposed to govern, is a government that stands condemned. And what policy can have been more egotistical than that pursued by the *bourgeoisie* of Europe

since its advent to power? Even as, to-day, equality is the pretext under which the masses seek to satisfy instincts of hatred and lucre, so, during the nineteenth century, was liberty the catchword by means of which the *bourgeoisie* sought to justify an inhuman exploitation of labour in the interests of capitalism—an exploitation such, that it must inevitably have led to a general biological regression of the race, had not the strongest of human instincts, that of self-preservation, induced the most far-sighted representatives of the *bourgeoisie* to have recourse to legislative measures in order to limit it. But mere legislative measures are insufficient to counteract the moral effects of an entire social policy systematically based on egotism. The social policy of the *bourgeoisie*, founded on individualism, on an antisocial exaggeration of egotistical sentiments, only modified itself unwillingly and under the pressure brought to bear from outside. Protective measures were adopted with regard to the work of children, women, and young persons, not because of any sympathy being felt for the sufferings of those unable to defend themselves against the rapacious greed of unscrupulous employers; but because the more clear-sighted of the *bourgeoisie* perceived that, in permitting women and children to be sacrificed to the greed of gain of capitalist slave-drivers, the *bourgeoisie* was itself, in the long run, cutting its throat. It is obvious that, if the hygienic conditions in which labour is accomplished sink beneath a certain irreductible *minimum*, the biological value of the labourers will be diminished; and diminished biological value of the labourers means diminished capacity to work, consequently diminished production; which latter, in its turn, signifies diminished returns for the capitalist. From this purely egotistical standpoint did the more far-sighted representatives of the *bourgeoisie* undertake to limit the exploiting power of the capitalist. But, as we have said, a social policy,

even if its effects be good, which is derived exclusively from egotistical calculations—which is not inspired by the idea of fraternity—which is not fertilised by the living stream of fraternity—is a policy which will remain without any of the moral effects that a social policy in the true sense of the word should produce. The social legislation of the *bourgeoisie* has not touched the heart of the people, but it has whetted their appetite. The people have understood that it is a legislation based on calculations of self-defence, that it does not derive from a policy inspired by sympathy with suffering, by a sincere wish to redress grievances and to avoid unnecessary hardships. The people have seen that the only sentiment to which its rulers are accessible is the sentiment of fear; and the people endeavour consequently to terrorise what they consider to be a cowardly government into abdication of all authority.

The effects produced by our actions are never lost. And if we to-day see the masses destitute of all higher moral ideals, a prey to the lowest forms of materialism, inspired in all their strivings by the greed of gain, by hatred and envy; this is due to the pernicious example set them by a *bourgeoisie* which, having destroyed the old moral restraints that curbed popular passion, has itself known no higher ideal than that of enriching itself, no higher aim than that of lucre, no higher sentiment than that of egotism. The egotism of the higher spheres has had its inevitable repercussion in the lower spheres of society—it has engendered boundless egotism among the masses. When we see the corruption of the governing classes, the absence of all notion of responsibility among them, the hardness of heart and egotism of those whose task it is to guide and direct society—can we wonder at the egotism and the corruption of the masses? The egotism and vanity of a *parvenue* class prompted to the suppression of the old faiths. The *bourgeoisie*, having attained to power, having enriched

itself, having obtained the means whereby all material desires and cravings may be satisfied, was too proud to bow down before a higher power, too proud to submit to the restrictions imposed by a moral law. In order that its own egotistical interests might be furthered without let or hindrance, it undertook to destroy the old faiths, which in its arrogant self-satisfaction it termed superstitions, because these faiths curbed individual desires and checked the outburst of individual passions. Such superstitions might be good enough for the masses, but they must not be permitted to interfere with the enjoyment of life, with the pursuit of gain and pleasure, which were the only aims that the *bourgeoisie* set itself. And the *bourgeoisie* paused not to consider the effect of a destruction of the traditional moral restraints on the masses—it did not ask itself whether these moral restraints are not indispensable bulwarks of social stability, if their disappearance would not provoke a formidable outburst of egotism among the masses which, henceforth uncontrolled, would then sweep forward to lay hands on the wealth and privileges of the *bourgeoisie*.

The consequences, which any careful observer might have foreseen, are now making themselves felt. We see now the results of the destruction of the old moral restraints so wantonly and so stupidly undertaken by the *bourgeoisie*. True, the latter has not, as a general rule, followed the example set by the French *bourgeoisie*—has not openly and officially decreed that God does not exist any longer and that Christianity is a degraded superstition. In other countries it has, on the contrary, elected to appear before the people clothed in robes of piety. If the *bourgeoisie* hopes to throw dust in the eyes of the people by means of such contemptible pharisaism, of such a pitiable masquerade, then indeed is it woefully mistaken. Probably no one outside a lunatic asylum is capable of being deceived by the Christian effusions

of a *bourgeois* society at bay, and which seeks to postpone the inevitable *débâcle* with the assistance of the Master, whose teaching the *bourgeoisie* has too long sought to turn to scorn and derision. The *bourgeoisie* forgets that doctrines preached merely with the lips fail to carry conviction. After that the masses have been infected with the virus of egotism, taught to regard the acquisition of earthly wealth as the *raison d'être* of life, taught that the end justifies the means—that the acquisition of wealth suffices to pass the sponge over the immoral acts committed in order to acquire it; after that the masses have been treated to the spectacle of a *bourgeoisie* trampling under foot all moral laws, when such laws have stood in the way of the satisfaction of personal interests: after all this, it is too late to come and preach resignation in the name of those same moral laws that one has systematically neglected to observe oneself—too late to preach disinterestedness when one's whole existence has been nothing else but a race after lucre.

The doctrine and practice alike of the *bourgeoisie* have acted as ferments of corruption on the masses—theory and conduct have been here equally pernicious, which is only natural, seeing that the conduct was the outcome of the theory. The antisocial doctrine of individualism could not but sap the bonds of social solidarity and social cohesion. It is not the place here to go into details regarding the concrete results of the application of the doctrine to social life; some of these results we have enumerated in a previous work.[1] How could society not be gangrened by the prevalence of such a doctrine as the famous *each for himself*? Such a doctrine ignores the foundations of social life. Society is not a collection of heterogeneous, warring atoms, but an organic whole of which the parts are mutually dependent on each other for existence. It can exist only on condition that the individuals

[1] Chatterton-Hill, *Heredity and Selection in Sociology*, Part III. ch. ii. (1907).

composing it make certain sacrifices, that they surrender a portion of their individuality — only if each individual constantly bears in mind that his life is conditioned by the life of the great organism of which he is a cell, and that he is therefore linked by indissoluble links to all the other individuals whose lives go to make up the existence of that social organism. The idea of society implies necessarily the correlative idea of solidarity. The individual is not and cannot be an end unto himself; he must have an end which is superior to his individuality, seeing that his life is conditioned by the life of society—that without the society he would not be. The individual is the debtor of the past, seeing that he profits by all the manifold acquisitions of civilised life that are due to the labours and sacrifices of past generations—that the entire patrimony of the present generation, his own included, whether the biological patrimony or the social patrimony, is derived from the past. Even as he is a debtor of the past, so is the individual bound by a debt to the present; for without the activity of those who surround him, without the assistance of his fellow-workers in the great social hive, he would be powerless; at the most, were he alone, could he vegetate, if we suppose that he could unaided secure the food necessary to maintain physiological existence? The doctrine of *each for himself* implies that the individual is an independent entity, detached from all social obligations. But when we recognise that the individual is bound by certain social obligations that he cannot repudiate, seeing that his life is conditioned by the life of society; it ensues that the individual, mindful of his obligations, mindful of the ties which unite him to all the other members of the society to which he owes everything, is bound to work for others, even as others work for him. *Each for all, and all for each*, is the doctrine which alone corresponds to the realities of social life.

The individual being thus detached in theory from all social obligations—why should he be asked to respect social laws, to obey the moral regulations edicted by the collectivity? If each is for himself, then each is an end unto himself and consequently a law unto himself. The logical *terminus* of individualism is anarchy. The *bourgeoisie*, which affected to be roused to indignation by the anarchist movement among the masses at the end of the nineteenth century, movement which manifested itself chiefly in murderous acts perpetrated by young persons suffering from an unhinged and diseased mind—the *bourgeoisie* it is whose individualist anarchism has prepared the way for revolutionary anarchism. It has trampled under foot all the moral laws of humanity, it has practised all the forms of jobbery and spoliation without any attempt at concealment, the almighty dollar has crushed every sentiment of probity, of delicacy, and of honour, out of existence; and the masses have seized hold, in their turn, of the arms forged for them by a governing class destitute of all foresight, of all sense of responsibility, and on whose tombstone can be engraved the words that appear to have been its motto: *Jouir jusqu'au déluge.*

## III

The doctrine of fraternity, as preached by Christianity, implies the existence of three underlying conditions, without which it can be but an empty and meaningless phrase: firstly, the subordination of individual aims to social aims; secondly, the recognition of the equal dignity, of the equal *moral* value, of all categories of labour—or, in other words, the recognition of individual dignity, of the moral value of the individual, irrespective of the latter's capacities or social position; thirdly, individual humility, as contrasted with the arrogance, vanity,

and self-satisfaction we find so widely prevalent at the present day.

When we come to analyse more closely the idea of fraternity, we shall find, effectively, that this notion implies the existence of the three conditions aforesaid. All men are brothers, because all work with a view to realising aims which are common to all—because all are strongly integrated in a whole dominated by powerful ideals that act as a bond of unity; all men are brothers, because all are equal in dignity before the Moral Law; all men are brothers, because all are conscious of their moral insufficiency—because this consciousness incites to solidarity, since each must show indulgence to the failings of others, even as he needs the indulgence of others for his own failings. Social integration, the recognition of human dignity, individual humility—are thus the conditions presupposed by the doctrine of fraternity. If these conditions fail, fraternity may exist on paper, as in the first and third Republics in France; but it cannot exist as a living reality.

The three fundamental conditions under which alone the doctrine of fraternity can bring forth fruit, were all of them realised by Christianity. Christianity integrated society by means of the Christian ideal—it knit the members of the community together in the love and veneration of a common tradition. Christianity introduced the notion of human dignity, and its counterpart, individual humility, basing both conceptions on the existence of a Moral Law which, being Absolute in its nature, is exterior and superior to all the fluctuations of the finite and relative world. Before Christianity, the notion of human dignity as such—of a dignity attaching to the human personality as such, irrespective of social rank—did not exist. Neither, indeed, did the notion of humility. The nearest approach to this last notion which existed previously to Christianity, was the humiliation inflicted on the lower, and more especially on the slave, classes. But

the humiliation thus inflicted was inflicted by purely human laws, on grounds that had nothing to do with morality; and it was an unlimited humiliation, if we may thus express ourselves—a humiliation that crushed down the humiliated classes, who had no belief in their own inalienable dignity to prop them up and console them. The humility preached by Christianity results, on the contrary, from the voluntary submission of the individual to a divine law; and it has its counterpart in the notion of human dignity. The humiliation brutally inflicted by an exterior power prompted solely by egotistical motives, is far removed from the humility resulting from the consciousness of one's own shortcomings, from the willing subordination of oneself to a power recognised as higher and better.

When judging the value of Christianity, we must be extremely careful to avoid falling into the grave error of confounding two wholly distinct categories: the moral and the social, or, if we prefer it, the absolute and the relative. The confusion of these categories is the cause of the numerous aberrations which have distorted the teaching of Jesus in the course of centuries, and which have sought to represent that teaching as a justification of equality, of communism, and of anarchy. In no doctrine do we find such confusion to be more productive of errors than in Tolstoyism. Based on a radically false starting-point, the doctrine of Tolstoi could not but constitute a tissue of absurdities. If we seek to apply the famous *nolite judicare et nolite condemnare* to social life—or the equally famous command to turn the left cheek when struck on the right one—it is evident that anarchy must result; and anarchy engenders social disruption. In the same way, with many of the sayings of Jesus. How would any one, for instance, consent to work if salaries were regulated on the principles inculcated in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard? If we seek to apply such sayings to social

existence, if we take certain precepts contained in the Sermon on the Mount as enunciating social laws, then is it clear that the teaching of Jesus, as far as it has any social purport, would infallibly lead—were it applied—to the annihilation of society. It is an extraordinary example of the crass ignorance of the elementary necessities of social life of which a man of high intellect can be guilty, that Tolstoi saw precisely in his ridiculous caricature of Christ's teaching, the ideal for society. For this extraordinary social reformer, the ideal for society was social annihilation—the salvation of society could only be sought in its disintegration and disruption.

And the founder of the religion that saved Western society from annihilation is held up to our admiration and veneration, not because he was instrumental in averting such a catastrophe, but because he did his level best, according to Tolstoi, to bring about that catastrophe! Let those who admire Tolstoi's social philosophy see, if they will, the salvation of society in anarchy and disruption—but let them not render Jesus responsible for their own aberrations.

The fact is that never did Jesus seek to apply to this finite and relative world of ours, conditions that prevail exclusively in the world of the infinite and the absolute. Such conditions could not be applied in our world, seeing that we know them not, that they escape all our methods of investigation, that we lack entirely all means whereby to judge them. Realist as he was, Jesus did not set himself the fruitless task of endeavouring to invert all natural and social laws, of trying to stand the world on its head, so to speak. He accepted fully the laws which govern our finite world and our finite existence; but above these laws he set the laws of the Infinite and the Absolute. Even as the physico-chemical and biological sciences bring us at every step to frontiers that our understanding cannot cross; even as these sciences show us the limits inexorably set to our

knowledge, and the impossibility in which we find ourselves of exceeding such limits; so does the research after the moral value of life bring us quickly to the boundary, and show us that the value of life must needs be exterior to life. For what compensation can we find in life itself for all the sufferings, for all the disillusions, for all the tears, which life brings with it? In order to find any such compensation, in order to find an answer to the anguished cry, *Wozu? Wohin?* we must seek for it outside the narrow limits of our finite existence. Thus whether it be in the intellectual or in the moral sphere, always do we find our life dominated by a higher life, always do we find ourselves overshadowed by the shadow of the great Unknown. Into this Unknown world we cannot penetrate, and yet it imposes its presence on us at every moment. On the mysterious ocean of the Unknown, no human barque can set sail—and yet the waves of that ocean never cease to beat, whether softly or violently, against the shores of human life.

And it was in this Unknown world—in this world of the Infinite and the Absolute—that Jesus placed the Moral Law which he came to reveal unto us: the Moral Law which is higher than the Social Law, because the former is eternal, because it appertains to the world of the Absolute; whereas the Social Law is but a human creation, responding to finite and passing needs. Our social laws are subordinated to a higher Moral Law, even as our physiological life is subordinated to forces that surpass the measure of human power. The Moral Law of Jesus was itself the Absolute, not merely an aspect of the Absolute. Its commands we can understand, but we cannot understand its methods. The methods of God, symbol and incarnation of the Moral Law, remain mysterious and incomprehensible. His measures are not our measures—the moral evaluation of our acts is not identical with the social evaluation of such acts. And this is inevitable,

if we consider that society can appreciate our acts *only* in respect of their utility or harmfulness for social life—can judge them *only* according to a purely utilitarian and finite standard; whereas the Moral Law, or God, judges human conduct according to what we may term an Absolute standard, according to a standard that does *not only* take account of the social utility or harmfulness of such conduct. The moral evaluation of our acts differs thus completely from their social evaluation. But the social evaluation always responds to social needs; and it remains, therefore, as an indispensable sanction for human conduct in so far as the latter affects social life. Most certainly did Jesus never seek to supplant the social evaluation of conduct by the moral evaluation—never seek to apply precepts which refer only to the moral life of the individual, to social conditions governed by finite laws and responding to finite necessities. Precepts such as the *nolite judicare*, which are evidently inapplicable as regards social life, take on another meaning as soon as we apply them to the moral life of the individual. For the laws which govern this world of ours, and to which we, finite beings, are subject—are none the less finite themselves; and they do not apply to the world of the Infinite, any more than the laws of the Infinite apply to our world.

Jesus not only fully recognised the difference between the moral and the social—between the moral, which is infinite and absolute, and the social, which is finite and relative—but he was careful to insist on it. *Reddite quae sunt Caesaris, Caesari; et quae sunt Dei, Deo*: the line of demarcation between the two spheres could not be more sharply drawn than Jesus drew it in these words. We must conform our conduct in this life to the laws that condition our finite existence; we must not "kick against the pricks," not waste our energy in seeking to destroy laws that dominate us. But, in the later phases of social evolution, the individual is not exclusively a

"social being"—his individuality tends ever more and more to differentiate itself, to assert itself, to liberate itself from the tyranny of the collectivity. It is this differentiated individuality, which no longer constitutes an integral part of the social whole, that must subject itself to the Moral Law. If the individual be not subordinated to such a higher law, in the measure that he emancipates himself from the bonds of social tyranny he will fall a prey to anarchy. In the early stages of social evolution the individual has no existence whatever, so to speak, outside the collectivity—his thoughts, and the actions they prompt, are moulded for him by the collective mentality. As he gradually reduces the "sphere of influence" of collective representations, as his personality gradually emerges and differentiates itself, so is it necessary to subordinate this "individualised personality" to another law, since it henceforth escapes the control of the social law. The Moral Law thus acts as an indispensable completion of the social law.

But the Moral Law does not only complete the social law—it frequently confounds itself with the latter. It is evident that the more the individual emancipates himself from social tyranny, the more does society risk to be disintegrated; for the individual will not consent to halve himself, so to speak, to consider one part of his personality as subject to society, and one part as independent. His liberation once commenced, it will tend inevitably to become an integral liberation — the commencing antagonism between individual interests and social interests will develop until a total rupture is reached. Hence the imperative necessity of checking individual liberty if the continuity of social existence is to be maintained. *The Moral Law subordinates to itself that part of the individual nature which escapes social control; but it also, in the form in which it was revealed by Jesus, lends the invaluable support of its high sanction to social laws.* All our acts

which directly concern the welfare of society, and which are under the control of social laws, are to conform to such laws, provided such laws themselves conform to the Moral Law. If we violate those social laws, we violate *ipso facto* the Moral Law. And *as regards the acts that escape social control, we are bound by the Moral Law to regulate our conduct in such a manner that the chief danger always menacing social existence, namely the development of egotism, be avoided.*

Because the Moral Law confounds itself frequently with the social law, it does not therefore ensue that the latter is co-extensive with the former. On the contrary, the Moral Law dominates the social law and completes it. Its precepts are applicable to that part of individual conduct which escapes social control; and the aim of such precepts is invariably to subordinate the individual to a power exterior to himself, and thereby to check the growth of an unhealthy egotism that must otherwise conduce to anarchy. For instance, the precept *nolite judicare* applies to the private judgments passed by an individual on other individuals; in this light it is perfectly comprehensible; and it is a precept that condemns not only the uncharitableness of harsh judgments, but the arrogance which is at the basis of all such judgments. Applied to society, the precept is either meaningless or grotesque. It is thus a precept applicable to individual acts that are outside social control, but it is a precept which at the same time tends to repress the development of antisocial feelings, in that it combats egotism and engenders altruism. In other words, the Moral Law at once completes and reinforces the social law.

It is exceedingly necessary that we bear in mind the essential difference between the Moral Law and the social law —necessary that we should remember that, if the one completes and reinforces the other, the two are nevertheless fundamentally different as regards their essence and their methods. The two are fundamentally different because they

appertain to fundamentally different worlds. The conditions that prevail in this finite world do not prevail in the world of the Absolute, and *vice versa*. We understand the commands of the Moral Law, in so far as they apply to our finite existence; but we do not understand the wherefore of such commands, nor do we know anything of the measure whereby God, creator and incarnation of the Moral Law, judges of our acts. All we know is that we are, all of us, equal before the Moral Law—for the moral evaluation of our conduct must needs differ altogether from the social evaluation. Inequality is the law of the finite world, equality of the Infinite.

The inequalities that necessarily exist in social life, and which result from differences of capacity constantly engendered by heredity and constantly accentuated by selection, were as fully admitted and recognised by Jesus, as was the equality of all before the Moral Law. The parable of the talents shows us this clearly; he with five talents differed in this life from him with two talents, but both "entered into the joy of their Lord" when their race was run, for both had used the capacities confided to them in a worthy manner. When Jesus said to his disciples, *Vos estis sal terrae, vos estis lux mundi,* it is evident that he considered them as greatly superior to other mortals. Similarly, when Jesus said to St. Peter, *Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam,* and when he expressly confided to him the power of the keys, it appears evident to any impartial person that Jesus recognised St. Peter to be the chief of the apostles, the Head of the Christian Church—recognising *ipso facto* the existence of inequality among the apostles. *Reddite quae sunt Caesaris, Caesari,* is a clear indication of our duty to submit to the laws governing social life, of which laws inequality is one of the most fundamental. St. Paul is exceedingly explicit concerning the necessity of subordination to those above us: *Obedite praepositis vestris et subjacete eis,* he writes. St. Peter

writes in a similar strain: *Subjecti igitur estote omni humanae creaturae propter Deum, sive regi quasi praecellenti, sive ducibus tamquam ab eo missis ad vindictam malefactorum, laudem vero bonorum. . . . Omnes honorate, fraternitatem diligite, Deum timete, regem honorificate. Servi subditi estote in omni timore dominis, non tantum bonis et modestis, sed etiam dyscolis.* And we need not insist on what has been invariably the doctrine of the Christian Church. It is clear that social inequality is fully recognised and admitted by Christianity.

But Christianity did not, like the individualist theories of the nineteenth century, content itself with merely recognising the existence of inequality, with merely admitting that a few are superior, whereas the great number are inferior. It did not, like the individualist theories of liberal economics, content itself with recognising that superior capacity entails superior rights for its possessor. Christianity, on the contrary, was always careful to insist, not on rights but on duties; it did not seek to develop egotism, but to refrain it; it did not flatter the superior individual, but taught him to humble himself before the Moral Law. Liberalism set before the individual no higher ideal than himself; the unique aim of the superior individual must be the development of his powers, with a view to satisfying with greater facility individual cravings and desires. Christianity gave the superior individual an end outside the limits of his personality, higher and more durable than himself. Christianity also taught the duty of self-development—only the aim of self-development is different in Christian ethics to what it is in liberal ethics. The self-development of the Christian means the constant development of his strength and power, in order that he may thereby serve more usefully his fellow-men—in order that he may become an ever more perfect citizen of the community to which he is subject; it means, also, the constant progress of his moral life, the unceasing effort to attain the ultimate goal of moral perfection. The

self-development of the Christian implies therefore rigorous self-control and persevering labour.

In the system of Christian ethics, the notions of duty and responsibility are the invariable correlatives of the notion of superiority. In the measure that capacity, and consequently power, increase, do also Duty and Responsibility increase. The possession of power does not signify the possession of means whereby egotistical interests may be better served. The possession of power, on the contrary, entails for him who possesses it onerous duties and grave responsibilities. Those who govern are responsible for the welfare, material and moral, of those who are governed. If Jesus tells his disciples that they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, he also reminds them that *ego elegi vos et posui vos, ut eatis et fructum afferatis.* If St. Paul enjoins on his followers the duty of obedience to those in authority, he hastens to add, *Ipsi enim pervigilant, quasi rationem pro animabus vestris reddituri.* The inferior are to submit themselves to the superior, because the latter care for the welfare of those under them, and must render account of their souls. The whole of the social teaching of Christianity is here admirably resumed by St. Paul. The words of the Apostle constitute a clear negation of the doctrine of equality, and an equally clear affirmation of the doctrine of fraternity. The duty of obedience on the part of the governed—the duty of vigilance on the part of the governing: such is the lesson taught us. St. Paul is careful to insist on the grave responsibility of those to whom the government of society is entrusted, for they must give account of the souls of those confided to their care. The possession of power imposes thus the most onerous of responsibilities: responsibility for the moral welfare of the governed. The duty of submission of the inferior is a light duty by comparison with the duty of vigilance imposed on the governing classes, on the superior few.

The parable of the talents teaches us the same lesson—namely, that duty and responsibility increase with capacity and power. He who has five talents must bring forth, by his labour, five more talents; whereas he to whom but two talents have been given, is only bound to produce a similar number of new ones. Duty and responsibility are always equivalent to capacity. Much is exacted from him to whom much has been given—great is the responsibility of him whom Nature has richly endowed.

The message of Jesus embraced all classes of society—and therein lies its incomparable sociological value. To those who are governed, that is to say, to the masses, Jesus inculcated the duty of submission to those in authority; to those who govern, to the *élite*, Jesus taught the double duty of exercising authority with firmness, and of caring for the material and moral welfare of the governed. Jesus thus sought to solve what we may call the social problem in the only way in which the latter can be solved, namely, by establishing an equilibrium between the divers social elements, whose interests tend to enter into conflict with each other. All the modern solutions of the social problem proposed during the last hundred and fifty years have proved unsatisfactory, precisely because of their unilateral character, because they have all of them taken into consideration but one aspect of the social relations, because they have failed to see that the normal character of social evolution depends on the maintenance of an equilibrium between the heterogeneous parts of the social organism. The liberal theory of the *Rechtsstaat* maintained on paper this essential equilibrium; but the curb it imposed on the egotism of those in power has proved altogether insufficient in practice. The application of liberal theories to the government of society has resulted in a complete "falsification of the balance" of social interests, for the liberal *régime* has served exclusively the interests of the governing classes. Socialism, on the other

hand, likewise falsifies entirely the balance of social interests, for it seeks professedly to further the sole interests of the masses, to bring about the extermination of all classes of society other than the proletariat. The mortal sin of Liberalism and of Socialism is that both develop class egotism.

Far different to these unilateral, one-sided doctrines, is the social synthesis realised by Christianity. On all, high and low, Christianity enjoins the practice of humility, of the humility that checks egotism in the individual. To each class it inculcates the notion of Duty—of Duty that increases with every step that one mounts in the social hierarchy—of Duty that is proportioned to the extent of power, to the extent of capacity; and this great doctrine of class duty, of class responsibility, is the best antidote to the development of egotism in the class—of that *Klassengeist* which obscures the fundamental idea of social solidarity. To the masses, Christianity inculcates the duty of submission to those alone capable of guiding a society, amidst the pitfalls and snares that perpetually menace the stability and the existence of that society. It is thus in their own interest that Christianity enjoins on the masses this duty of submission to those in authority; the masses must submit to their rulers for the same reason that the sailor submits himself to the orders of his captain: it is to the interest of the sailor to obey, seeing that insubordination on his part would very likely cause the wreck of the ship, and consequently his own death; and it is, similarly, to the interest of the masses to obey, seeing that revolt and revolution threaten the foundations of social life, and that social disruption cannot but entail the elimination of the entire society. But, on the other hand, it is indispensable that those to whom incumbs the difficult task of governing and directing society, show themselves to be equal to their mission—indispensable that they prove themselves worthy of the confidence of the masses. It is their duty to earn the respect of the masses by

manifesting their ability to exercise authority, to govern with a firmness that is unflinching when it is a question of safeguarding the legitimate interests of society. And it is their duty to win the love and affection of the masses by the zeal with which they minister to the latter's needs. Both these duties have been ignored by the *bourgeois* governments of Europe during the last century; and it is for having ignored them, that *bourgeois* society stands condemned to annihilation at no very distant date.

The governing classes are to be for the governed what the elder brother is for the younger. They must be able to repel insubordination, to maintain order and discipline. They must, however, not rule by the rod, but rule by affection; their authority must be based on the confidence they have gained, and of which they have proved themselves worthy. The government must beware of treating those subject to it with contempt. It must treat them as friends, even as the elder brother is a friend for the younger brother, even as Jesus was the friend of his disciples, to whom he said, *Jam non dicam vos servos . . . vos autem dixi amicos.* Those who govern must place their capacity and their experience at the service of the whole society—the experienced elder brother must guide the inexperienced junior, for "if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." These exceedingly true words pronounced by Jesus show us once more how clearly he recognised the necessity of authority in society—of a helmsman capable of steering the social ship, and capable of enforcing his will. Those who govern are responsible for the welfare, material and moral, of the governed, even as the elder brother is responsible for the welfare of the younger. The government of society is thus in the nature of a trust, and those who govern are in the position of trustees. They are the trustees for the welfare of society—welfare which can be assured only by unceasing vigilance, only if the trustees remain always conscious of the

grave responsibility assumed by them. The power which those who govern exercise, is a power to be wielded exclusively for the common good, and not for the furtherance of egotistical class interests. And what higher ideal could Christianity hold up to the rulers of society than the sublime words of Jesus: *Venite ad me omnes, qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam vos. Tollite jugum meum super vos, et discite a me quia mitis sum et humilis corde. . . . Jugum enim meum suave est, et onus meum leve?* Whatever the present century, saturated with egotism and vanity, may think, certain it is that such sublime words as these were uttered by no ordinary man; for their sublimity has never been attained by any other teacher, before or since. But these words do not apply exclusively to the individual and to individual distress; they have also a meaning for society. Even as Jesus was mild and humble of heart—even as his yoke was easy and his burden light—so should those who exercise power in society learn to temper firmness with mildness, so should they be mindful of the duty of humility, so should their yoke be easy and light. It will remain the eternal honour of the Catholic Church that it never ceased, during the long centuries of its uncontested supremacy, and before events had compelled it to make a political alliance with the secular power, to enjoin on the civil government the necessity of modelling its policy on the teaching of the Master who spoke such as none other has ever spoken.

The message of Christianity embraced, therefore, as we observed, all classes of society. The social genius of Christianity manifested itself in the realisation of a magnificent social synthesis, such as no other philosophy, before or after it, has been able to realise. And this social synthesis has as its keynote the notion of fraternity. Fraternity is unrivalled as a bond of social unity, of social solidarity. All men are brothers because all have the same fundamental duties, the same fundamental moral value and moral dignity, the same

consciousness of their respective shortcomings. Or we can, if we will, revert the proposition, and say that because all have the same fundamental duties, the same fundamental moral dignity, the same consciousness of their respective shortcomings, therefore all are brothers. All have the same fundamental duties towards society, but all have not the same capacity. Inequality of capacity entails necessarily social inequality; but this social inequality is engendered by finite laws, is due to finite causes, and responds to finite necessities. Over and above the finite stands the Infinite; over and above our social inequalities stands our moral equality. The fundamental duty which each one of us, high or low, must fulfil towards society, is at the same time a duty to be fulfilled towards the Moral Law, which remains the supreme sanction of the social law. And outside that social duty is also the directly moral duty, exacted from each individual, irrespective of rank or capacity, in regard to that part of individual conduct which escapes social control. All having, therefore, the same fundamental duty towards the Moral Law, all are equal before the Moral Law. As, however, capacities differ, and as the social value of the labour performed by each depends on capacity, so are we not equal before the social law, but unequal.

See, then, how wonderfully the doctrine of fraternity, as preached by Christianity, is adapted to the necessities of social life. The great social law of inequality is admitted and recognised, but the inevitable hardships that accompany its working are softened, are rendered acceptable, by the introduction of the idea of moral equality. Discontent is stilled, the dignity of even the humblest labour is safeguarded. Egotism is restrained, by the fact of each individual being constantly reminded of his duties towards Cæsar and towards God, towards the social law and towards the Moral Law—by the fact of each individual being taught to practise humility,

being taught to recognise the insufficiency and feebleness of his efforts, however great, by comparison with that which is required of him by a Moral Law that judges not according to our finite standards. Labour, instead of being a source of misery, becomes a source of joy, because all are conscious of working for the realisation of a common aim, of a common ideal—because each one is encouraged by the sympathy and esteem of the others, and can count on fraternal assistance in times of difficulty or distress. Individual egotism is sacrificed to an ideal higher than the individual, class egotism to an ideal higher than class. The individual is not alone in the world, isolated from his fellow-creatures, hating and distrusting the latter as dangerous rivals in a bitter and merciless struggle for existence. He feels himself to be the member of a great family, to the other members of which he is linked by common interests, common ideals, common aspirations. Society being thus strongly integrated, the individual is far better able to fulfil his duties, social and moral, and he is far more willing to fulfil them, because rendered more conscious of them.

This brings us back to our starting-point. If fraternity is to be realised, three conditions are indispensable. Fraternity implies the working of all together for a common ideal, for the common good—in other words, social integration; it implies, further, the recognition by each one of the dignity of all of the others; and it implies the practice of humility. Humility is indeed necessary, if egotism is to be sacrificed to higher ideals, and if those above are to admit the moral dignity of those below. Humility is essential for all classes. It is indispensable for those who are governed, for without it the duty of submission is hard to fulfil, the fact of social inferiority is hard to accept, although it be inevitable. And it is indispensable for the upper classes, for those whose duty it is to govern and to think; for without it these classes must tend to abuse of the power entrusted to them, to use such

power for the furtherance of exclusively egotistical interests, to forget the solidarity of their interests with the interests of the classes below them in the social hierarchy, to neglect the welfare of these lower classes for which they are responsible. Without humility the sacrifice of egotism is impossible; without the sacrifice of egotism, social integration is impossible; and without social integration, the continuity of social existence is impossible. How necessary, therefore, in this age of rampant egotism and self-satisfaction, is it that all classes of society be constantly reminded of the lofty ideal of Christianity—that the life of Jesus be perpetually held up before us as a great example—that the Cross be always in front of us now, even as it shone, in its humble and yet immortal splendour, amidst the fading light of evening, when the sun of Rome's glory was sinking beneath the darkened horizon. In the gloom that enshrouded the dying empire the Cross stood out against the stormy sky, a beacon-light to guide desolate humanity along new paths to a higher destiny.

And to-day, amidst the whirl of frivolities and amusements of a decrepit governing class, which has been unable alike to understand its responsibilities and to foresee the consequences entailed by the neglect of those responsibilities; amidst the din and clash of social strife, the whistling of the wind that announces the coming storm of the social revolution; amidst all this bustle and rush, turmoil and noise, it is necessary that we pause to listen to a voice that calls to us from across the quicksands of time, from beyond the silence of past centuries —to the voice that uttered the simple and sublime words, *Discite a me quia mitis sum et humilis corde.* Roman society, too highly cultured, pampered by too much luxury, corrupted by idleness, sensualism, and the too exclusive consecration of life to pleasure, but unable to comprehend the lesson conveyed by the life of Jesus—*obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.* Roman society could not understand the lesson

of humility; and Roman society was condemned, in consequence, to disappear from the scene of the world's history. Such, also, will inevitably be the fate of Western civilisation, unless it consent to profit by the experience of the past—unless it consent to learn the virtue of humility, to sacrifice egotistical interests to higher ideals.

We may, to conclude, resume in a single sentence the immense sociological importance of the doctrine of fraternity preached by Christianity: *Alone the notion of fraternity can reconcile the two conflicting necessities of inequality and of solidarity.* Fraternity admits social inequality, based on inequality of capacity; and at the same time it implies the solidarity of all, the working of all together for the common good—and likewise the recognition by each one of the moral dignity of all the others. Fraternity is a notion that responds to the needs of society, because it rises beyond the limits of society and of this finite life to seek for a higher sanction for Conduct and Duty; because it regards Duty as a correlative of capacity and consequently of inequality; because social inequality receives thereby an ethical significance; and because, in the doctrine of fraternity, social inequality is invariably limited by the idea of moral equality.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SUPREME DIGNITY OF LABOUR

*Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi.* The words of the gospel apply also to this world. Few, indeed, are called to the enjoyment of the world's riches and privileges—few called to the possession of power—few gifted with the qualities that make of them superior beings. The overwhelming majority of the members of society at any moment are condemned to a life of obscurity and strife, of toil and anxiety. They are born into the world, they see dimly, through the fog of daily labour and daily distress, the wealth of this world glittering before their eyes; but they will never touch this wealth, never know any of the comforts it can purchase, never guess the peace of mind it can engender; they will toil throughout youth, throughout manhood, possibly throughout old age; and they will finally be shovelled into the earth, their bones will rot, and the great world moves on without stopping one instant, heedless of those who embark on the journey from which there is no return.

During life, not one ray of light has penetrated the atmosphere of dark despair or of dull resignation in which they are compelled to vegetate until Death, the great Consoler, brings peace. Their toil has brought them no reward. Well may they ask, What is the value of life? What is the meaning of so sombre and so useless a tragedy?

All these countless victims of the world, these myriads of unknown toilers who have sacrificed their humble lives to the insatiable monster we call society—all these are the instruments, unconscious and obscure, but indispensable, by means of which the great developmental forces which shape social evolution can operate. At the price of untold sufferings, of much blood and of countless tears, do such forces operate—only at such a price can the benefit of their action be ultimately reaped.

Those, however, who are the victims mercilessly immolated to the ruthless deity of social progress, can they be expected to understand the wherefore of their martyrdom? Such as these cannot penetrate the mystery of far-distant Causes, working in them and through them, and working for the salvation of future society. If they never pause to reason, the enigma will never trouble them. But if they do pause—and be their mental faculties ever so weak—they cannot fail to question the value of life.

And the question will be put with all the more bitterness if the toilers and sufferers have before them the spectacle of a leisured class given up to pleasures and vanities, to ostentation and luxury, who know not what duty and responsibility mean, and whose whole existence is consecrated exclusively to frivolity or to the pursuit of gain. The utility of labour will appear the more questionable, if the only object of that labour be apparently to maintain a class of parasites. The injustice of suffering will appear the more terrible, when the cry of those who suffer awakens, among the privileged, no feelings other than indifference or contempt.

The dignity of labour is degraded when the higher spheres of society affect to despise work, and consider idleness as the ideal, as the only condition befitting superior beings. All loftier moral aspirations are stifled when the pursuit of wealth, the gratification of material desires, are held up as the sole

aims of life, as the only goal worthy of our efforts. Under the influence of such materialism, which spreads from the higher to the lower spheres, which gangrenes little by little all the classes of society, labour loses its value. It comes to be regarded as abasing human dignity, as an evil to be suppressed as quickly as possible.

Wealth is no longer considered as a means whereby social duties may be performed; it is regarded solely as a means for enabling its possessor to live in luxury and idleness. Luxury and idleness are the supreme ideals of society. When we have arrived at such a state of things—as we have arrived to-day — egotism is triumphant. And when egotism is triumphant, when the notion of duty is obscured, then are the masses ripe for revolution, the governing classes ripe for annihilation, and society as a whole ripe for disruption.

The great doctrine of fraternity implies the recognition of the supreme dignity of labour. All men are brothers, because all work, because all contribute, each according to his capacities, to the maintenance of social life, to the formation of the material and moral patrimony of society. No philosophy has ever insisted more strongly on the supreme dignity of labour than Christianity. Jesus was the son of a humble carpenter, and he himself worked in his father's workshop until thirty years of age. *Et erat subditus illis*—he was obedient unto his parents, and he was not ashamed of serving under Joseph's orders as Joseph's apprentice. For those who believe in the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth, it is certain that labour received here its highest consecration.

And when Jesus left the little workshop of Nazareth, where he had worked so many years, in order to commence his ministry, to attend to his Father's business as he himself expressed it—among whom did he seek his disciples? Among the workers and toilers. To whom did he go and preach?

Also to the workers and toilers. Of his disciples, Peter and Andrew, James and John, were simple fishermen, Matthew a publican; and the others were likewise, all of them, humble working men. The masses of the oppressed, the laborious multitude, the world of the toilers, of the outcast, flocked in their thousands to hear Jesus preach; and it was with regard to these, lowly sons and daughters of labour, that the Master spoke the beautiful *misereor super turbam*—for these that, according to the gospel story, he performed the miracle of the five thousand loaves.

If we turn to the teaching of Jesus, we find expressed in it clearly the ideas of the supreme dignity of labour, and of the equality of all the various categories of labour before the Moral Law. In the parable of the talents, the same reward awaits him who only possessed two talents as is given to him who had five talents. To the one as to the other are spoken the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." This parable has a double meaning: it shows us, on the one hand, that the man who has accomplished little because he has only received little, ranks as the equal of him who has accomplished much because he has received much; but it shows us also, on the other hand, that he who has received little must not think that the fact of his having received but little justifies his remaining idle. The servant who has, in the parable, received but one talent, is punished and cast out into the darkness for having failed to make use of the little confided to him. Those whom Nature has equipped but scantily, have the same duty to perform in respect of labour as those to whom Nature has supplied riches in abundance. Each must work in such a way that his patrimony, however small, bring forth fruit for the benefit of society. No one, in consequence, must permit his patrimony to remain idle—for that which has been given him has been given in order that he may increase and multiply it by his labour.

We cannot conceive of a clearer indication to us, that to labour is our sacred duty. Neither can we conceive of a less ambiguous reminder to all classes of society, of the responsibility borne by each one of them. The upper classes, having received much, must produce much; but the lower classes must not think that, having received but little, they need produce nothing. He who has received little must not fail to work in such a manner, that the little he has be increased proportionately. And the upper classes who have received abundantly, must beware of thinking that the richness of their patrimony is accounted to them for virtue—those to whom Nature has been generous must not suppose that higher capacity entitles them to greater consideration before the Moral Law. Judged according to the principles of the Moral Law, before the higher tribunal of Absolute Justice, the labour of the *savant* and the statesman has the same value as the labour of the blacksmith or the carpenter. The weight which is placed in the balance, increases in heaviness according as the capacity increases in dimension—and this weight, being of a moral nature, appertains to the domain of the Absolute, and cannot be measured by our relative understanding. The sacred duty of labour remains the same, whatever be the capacity, and however small the latter may be; but the responsibility increases with the capacity.

The remarkable parable of the workers in the vineyard teaches us the same lesson. The proprietor of the vineyard had agreed with his labourers to pay the latter one penny (*denarius*) as remuneration for their work. At the third hour the proprietor went out, and, seeing other labourers standing idle around, sent them in to work likewise. Similarly at the sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours, fresh labourers were added to the original cohort. The evening having come, the proprietor of the vineyard paid to all the labourers alike, to those of the first and third hours as also to

those of the eleventh hour, the same remuneration of one penny. And when the labourers of the first hour protested, arguing that it was not just that they, who had worked throughout the heat of the day, should receive the same remuneration as those who had only commenced work at the eleventh hour, the proprietor of the vineyard answered: *Amice, non facio tibi injuriam: nonne ex denario convenisti mecum? Tolle quod tuum est, et vade.* The reply may have seemed harsh, and to us it may appear incomprehensible. But read what the proprietor of the vineyard adds: Is your eye bad, because mine is good?—*An oculus tuus nequam est, quia ego bonus sum?* Which means: Is your eye, adapted solely to the world of the relative, capable of discerning justice meted out according to a measure that is not of this world?

The parable of the workers in the vineyard as also the parable of the talents, teaches us that all the categories of labour, however different may be the *social* value attributed to their various products, possess the same *moral* value. Christianity has, as we observed in the last chapter, recognised the inequalities which prevail in this world of ours; it has not sought to combat Nature, to stand the natural world on its head, so to speak; and had it thus attempted to go contrary to natural law, Christianity must speedily have ended in bankruptcy. Christianity therefore accepted the laws prevailing in the natural world, of which inequality is one of the most fundamental. Above such inequality, however, which is only of a *relative* nature, seeing that it results from the working of a law applicable only in this *relative* world of ours, Christianity set the notion of equality, which belongs to the domain of the Absolute. Jesus did not seek to apply conditions that appertain to the domain of the Absolute, to this relative world in which we live. To have done so would indeed have been folly; and those who attribute to Jesus the wish to see such an

impossibility realised, misunderstand strangely the whole purport of his teaching. Jesus was not a visionary dreamer, but a realist who possessed a rare comprehension of the realities of existence. Conditions which prevail in the world of the Absolute are not applicable in the world of the Relative; but such conditions do, none the less, remain as a higher ideal. Our knowledge is strictly limited; the realities which our understanding is capable of grasping, are but phenomena of which we cannot penetrate the inner significance. At every step we take, we are brought face to face with the Unknown. The Absolute world dominates our phenomenal world and overshadows it, manifesting its presence every time we seek to explore the underlying Causes of phenomena, to lighten the darkness of the mystery that enshrouds our life and our destinies. Although we cannot cross its threshold, although we are unable to raise the veil that hides its secrets from our finite vision, the Absolute is thus none the less a "reality" to us, although a negative reality, a reality that we cannot aspire to know, seeing that it escapes all our methods of investigation. The ideal conditions which prevail in this domain of the Absolute, in this domain that perpetually dominates our finite existence, remain as a great yearning—as an aim that we cannot hope to realise here, but that none the less presents itself to us as the natural goal towards the attainment of which we should direct our efforts.

Inequality signifies inequality of capacity. Capacity is a biological conception, it is derived from heredity and is constantly developed by selection. We measure capacity according to physical and intellectual standards, we judge it from a utilitarian point of view, according to the benefit which society is susceptible of deriving from it. But the standard by which we judge of capacity, and which is based on the utility to society of such capacity, is not the standard by

which capacity is judged of in the light of the moral law. The Moral Law, which Jesus identified with God, takes not account of the capacity *per se*, or of the capacity in its relation to social needs, but of the *will* which underlies each individual capacity. The *will* is of a moral, and not of a biological nature. We understand the laws that govern the biological evolution of man, which evolution belongs to the domain of the finite and the relative; but the laws that govern his moral nature escape our understanding. For the moral nature of man appertains to the Absolute, partakes of the Absolute. It is, therefore, not subject to the laws which prevail in this finite and relative world; and it is, consequently, not subject to the law of inequality that is operative in the sphere of phenomena.

The parable of the talents shows that Jesus recognised fully the inequality of capacity of those whose toil and labour, in the manifold and varied spheres of activity, go to make up the patrimony of society. He who has five talents is the man of superior capacity, who can consequently produce more than the man of less capacity, who has only two talents. Not only can the man with five talents produce more from a quantitative point of view—he can also produce things of greater qualitative value. The inequality of capacity of the various labourers, and the consequent inequality of the products of labour, is thus admitted by Jesus. Society measures the value of labour according to the capacity of the labourers, according to the utility which each category of products possesses for social life; it rewards the labourers *according to their capacity to produce things judged useful* to society at any given moment. But over and above this social evaluation, there remains the moral evaluation which takes account solely of the *will* underlying each individual capacity. This moral evaluation of a moral entity on which we have no hold is not, of course, accessible to our finite understanding, that can grasp

only the relative. Jesus left it in the hands of God, considered as identical with the Absolute.

The moral evaluation of labour being thus entirely independent of its social evaluation, the dignity of all the various categories of labour is safeguarded. Those at the bottom of the social scale rank as the equals of those at the top, when judged according to the principles of the Moral Law. It is in this light that we must interpret the words of Jesus to his disciples: *Qui major est vestrum, erit minister vester.* He who, having great capacities, becomes arrogant on that account, considering himself as superior to those having less capacity, must recollect that if, in this finite existence, "the princes of the world exercise dominion and wield great power," yet are our scales of justice and remuneration different from those of the Absolute world. Certainly must he who is richly endowed by Nature be careful to utilise his gifts, careful to fertilise the field of his patrimony by his labour—and that labour must be in harmony with the extent of his possessions. The greater the heritage, the more intense must be the labour. No man must therefore forget his situation, no man must sink beneath his situation, no man must prove himself unworthy of his inheritance. For, in this case, he has chosen to forsake the duties and responsibilities which have been allotted to him; and if he who, having received but one talent, is cast out into the darkness for having neglected his duty, much greater must needs be the punishment awaiting him who, having five talents, has left duty unfulfilled. He who has received much must consequently be proud, not of his capacity, but of the possibilities given him of utilising that capacity for the good of society. He must be proud of his situation, not because of the honours and privileges attached to it, but because of the onerous duties and responsibilities which such a situation implies. He should set his pride on fulfilling those duties, on labouring in a manner commensurate

with the wealth of his patrimony. His post is a post of honour and a post of danger. It is an honour to be able to labour in such a way as to bring forth fruit a hundred-fold; but the danger is always present that those in high places abuse their position, that they perceive only the material advantages conferred by such a position, and are blind to the duties and responsibilities entailed by it. The pride of the superior man should reside in the consciousness of having been equal to the calls made upon him, of having proved himself worthy of his high and responsible situation.

The teaching of Jesus thus not only admits the differences of rank due to inequality of capacity, but imposes on those placed in the higher ranks the duty of pride. They are to be proud of their inheritance; yet only because this inheritance entails grave responsibilities, yet only because this inheritance burdens them with duties so formidable as to be the supreme test of their value. It must be their pride to show their value, to show the stuff they are made of, to show that they are able to fulfil the high duties exacted of them; it must be their pride to be able to produce, at the close of their career, an account that bears witness to the fact that they have nobly striven to wipe out their debt to society by the services they have rendered; it must be their pride to be able to say, with St. Paul, when the sun has sunk and the dusk of evening obscures the horizon, *Bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi.*

But the pride of duty and responsibility inculcated by Jesus is very different from the arrogance due to self-satisfaction and vanity. *Vos estis sal terrae,* said Jesus to his disciples. The latter are to remember that they are the salt of the earth, and they are to be proud of being called, in consequence, to fulfil the most onerous and the most exacting duties. But they are to remember also that "the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve." Bearing this in mind, they are to say with St. Paul, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Their

pride must be in the consciousness of duty done, and well done. But if they are to be proud of labour accomplished, they are to remember that the force by which they have laboured is not theirs, but that it was given them by a Higher Power. Therefore are they not to be vain and arrogant; but, humbling themselves, they are to regard the labour accomplished by them as always inferior to the labour due—they are to consider their debt to be of such magnitude that it never can be adequately compensated for.

And he to whom little has been given, let him succumb neither to despair nor to envy. If he give way to despair, then will he not work, for he will regard his work as useless, because too insignificant. But work is exacted also from him, even though he has received but two talents; and, if he shirk that work, he will be rigorously called to account. Let him not be envious, seeing that envy will profit him nothing—seeing that, as we are reminded in the old fable, if the frog attempt to swell to the dimensions of the ox, it will burst. Let him do the work exacted from him, let him bring forth the fruit commensurate with his capacities. However humble that work may be, it will in no wise lose its reward, for the moral evaluation of labour considers not the mere social value of the latter. He who has received five talents, and he who has received but two, will both of them, if their talents have borne fruit in proportion, hear the words spoken, "Well done." When the widow put her humble mite into the alms-box, Jesus declared to his disciples, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, she has put in more than all the others together." It is not the material value of labour, not its social value, which the Moral Law considers, but the *will* underlying all labour, however humble. Those who are called to work in the vineyard at the eleventh hour, receive the same reward as those who have worked therein since the first hour, because the will in both cases has been identical.

Here again we see how magnificently the teaching of Jesus applies to all classes of society. It reminds all of their duties, and it checks, in all classes, the tendency to egotism. Greater capacity, far from rendering its possessors egotistical and self-satisfied, should render them proud only of their responsibilities, proud only of the opportunity afforded them of proving their value, proud only of being able to labour the more intensely for the common good. And those whose capacity is inferior, who are less generously endowed by Nature, have also their responsibility. They also have their work to perform, their share of social duties to execute. But Christianity does not content itself with saddling all classes, high and low, with responsibilities; it does not content itself with indicating to the individual his duties. With a consummate knowledge of human psychology, it seeks also to establish the counterpart of those duties, seeks to reward the individual for his persevering efforts, to compensate him for his sacrifices, to pay him adequately for his labour. Duties performed towards society without any return being offered, is like labour accomplished without salary under the pressure of compulsion. Both tend to be badly done, both tend to sicken and disgust, in the long run, those who accomplish them. The more greatly does the individual intellect develop, the more rational does the individual become; and the less willing will he be to perform duties towards society without compensation, the more intolerable will the social tyranny that exacts such duties appear to him. Such a state of affairs is perilous in the extreme for society. In the interest of society it becomes imperatively necessary to establish an equilibrium between the individual and the collectivity—to prevent the antagonism between social requirements and individual interests from reaching a point at which it could not but menace the stability of society. And this is what Christianity has done. Those to whom incumb the most irksome social

duties, those whose lot it is to accomplish the most painful and the most ungrateful tasks, those who perform the most humble and the least remunerative labour: all these, who would otherwise be necessarily prone to revolt, and whose revolt, if successful, would engender social disruption—all these find, in Christianity, compensation for the sacrifices demanded of them; and they are thus rendered willing to make the necessary sacrifice of their egotism, sacrifice which is indispensable if the continuity of social life is to be assured.

# CHAPTER VI

## MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

### I

It is a commonplace saying, that the stability of society is conditioned by the stability of family life. And this saying is profoundly true. It is therefore inevitable that religion, which is the great instrument of social integration and stability, should strive, by all the means in its power, to maintain the cohesion of the family—should envelop family life and the family organisation in a network of regulations, having for their object to prevent a dissolution of the domestic institutions. In the most primitive religions we find a regulation of marriage and of the family organisation, so complicated as to be nearly incomprehensible to civilised minds. And, as we ascend the scale, we are always confronted by similar regulations, different in their form, but identical as regards their aim and as regards their stringency.

It has been said, and rightly said, that the family is a miniature society. It is in the family that the individual first learns the great and fundamental duty of submission—in the family that he first learns the other great social duty of co-operation. And when the child has attained to maturity, has in its turn founded a new family—then does the young man or the young woman first learn the meaning of responsibility.

Family life is the great educator; it is here that the individual is constantly reminded, all through life, of his Duty and of his Responsibility; that is to say, of the two things without which the existence of society is impossible—nay, unthinkable. No other school, no other environing influences, are comparable to the wonderful school, to the wonderful influence, of family life.

In the early stages of culture, the family and all the domestic relations are not only submitted to religious influences, but are essentially of a religious nature. The links between parent and offspring, and all other links of kinship, are only quite secondarily, if at all, of a physical nature; such links are primarily, if not exclusively, mystical. Even later, when the physiological character of parentage and kinship has come to be recognised, the family remains nevertheless an essentially religious institution—as the marriage regulations contained in the Veda clearly show us. In Greece and Rome the family has still retained much of its original religious character—the *paterfamilias* still unites in his person the functions of head of the domestic group, and of priest who sacrifices to the family gods. With the advent of Christianity the family ceases to be *per se* a religious institution, while continuing to remain subject to the control and supervision of religion.

It was only natural that Jesus of Nazareth, who, by his preaching, sought to lay the foundations of a new religion, should seize the opportunity, when it presented itself to him, of laying down the law with regard to marriage. The stability of family life depends on the stability of the marriage tie. Turning his attention to the latter question, therefore, Jesus enunciated the doctrine whereby the marriage tie is indissoluble, save by death:

"*Dimittet homo patrem et matrem, et adhaerebit uxori suae, et erunt duo in carne una. Itaque jam non sunt duo, sed una caro. Quod ergo Deus conjunxit, homo non separet.*"

And when the Jews asked him if it were permissible to repudiate one's wife, repudiation admitted by the Mosaic Law, Jesus replied with the severe words:

"*Quoniam Móyses ad duritiam cordis vestri permisit vobis dimittere uxores vestras: ab initio autem non fuit sic. Dico autem vobis, quia quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam, nisi ob fornicationem, et aliam duxerit, moechatur: et qui dimissam duxerit, moechatur.*"

The only difficulty of interpretation which arises concerning these words, is as to whether Jesus did or did not admit a dissolution of marriage in the one case of adultery. The Roman Church categorically denies that any such admission is contained in the doctrine propounded. The Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches, on the other hand, allow divorce if the adultery of either of the partners is proved; such is likewise the standpoint adopted by Protestantism, in the innumerable forms under which it exists. An exception to this general doctrine of Protestantism is perhaps to be found in the doctrine of the Protestant Church of England, in which a section of the clergy refuses to admit the dissolution of marriage under any circumstances; but the doctrine of the Church of England is an exceedingly wide and fluctuating one, and it is impossible to formulate it definitely on any single subject—impossible, in consequence, to judge of the attitude of that Church towards the question of marriage and divorce. There where theologians disagree, it is not admissible that laymen intervene; we therefore abstain from emitting an opinion as to whether Catholic theologians, or the theologians of other confessions, are right in their respective interpretations of the doctrine of Jesus regarding marriage. The sociologist can appreciate that doctrine only according to its social consequences—only according to the influence exerted by it on the evolution of society. If he finds that the social effects of the Catholic interpretation have been better than the social

effects of the Protestant interpretation—if he finds that the Catholic doctrine has been more favourable to the maintenance of social stability; then must the sociologist pronounce that doctrine to be "right," according to the only criterion which he possesses whereby to judge of it.

Regulations affecting the sexual life of the individual are the most difficult of any to apply. The strongest instinct in human nature is the sexual instinct; and it is in this instinct that egotism manifests itself with the greatest force. It requires power of a colossal magnitude to control the sexual instinct, to discipline it, to adapt it to social necessities. Only by means of the severest *taboo* are restraints placed, in primitive societies, on the satisfaction of sexual desires. When the material automatic sanctions, whereby society seeks to enforce its commands, have given place to sanctions of a moral nature, the control of the sexual life becomes still more difficult; for a moral sanction, however terrible, has rarely the power to outweigh the imperious, often irresistible, desires of the moment. Even during the epoch of its greatest political splendour, from the eighth to the fourteenth century, the immense authority and influence of the Catholic Church proved insufficient to enforce with anything like completeness the law prohibiting adultery—to say nothing of the law prohibiting sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. Man is essentially a polygamic animal; the introduction of monogamy, there where the number of women was limited, was for him in the nature of a galling restriction. Every time it has been possible for him to escape the irksome bonds imposed by monogamy, he has been quick to avail himself of the opportunity. And yet the necessity of monogamy for Western society is proved by the very fact of its having maintained itself, despite all individual revolts, from the early days of the Roman republic down to the present time. Had it not been a fundamental necessity for Western society, monogamy would

long since have disappeared before the violent opposition of the strongest individual instincts.

In view of the fundamental importance of maintaining monogamy in the interest of the continuity of social existence, and in view of the tremendous difficulties attendant on the fulfilment of this essential task of social defence, the Catholic Church could only hope to succeed, even partially, in its mission, if it relentlessly and categorically refused to countenance a derogation to the monogamic marriage law under any shape or form. Absolutely indifferent to the individual claim to happiness, to the individual demand for satisfaction of the most imperious instinct, the Church took solely into consideration the interests of society. It knew full well that any exception made to the rule once for all laid down, any concession granted to human weakness, any deviation from the straight path traced out, would be fatal; for it would be the introduction of the thin end of the wedge into the masonry of the social edifice. The only way in which the Church could hope to combat the excesses due to lack of restraint placed on the sexual feelings, was—once the material automatic sanction of the *taboo* no longer existed—by attaching to all sexual intercourse outside the married state a moral stigma. All gratification of the sexual feelings outside the married state implied the committing of a "mortal sin"—implied a grave breach of the moral law, which could be atoned for only by adequate penance. Unflinchingly, without regard to the opinions of the day, without paying heed to the inconvenience and suffering caused to individuals by the enforcing of so stringent a rule, the Church condemned every derogation to the law of strict monogamy, never admitting any extenuating circumstances, never authorising an exception to be made, on whatever plea it might be sought to obtain it.

Of all the restraints imposed on individual conduct, the

restraint placed on the satisfaction of sexual desires is the most irksome. Belief in any number of given dogmas, the necessity of attending public worship, fasting, penance—all this is relatively easy; but against the rigorous regulations edicted by the Catholic Church with regard to his sexual life, the individual will never cease to chafe and fret. Even in the centuries in which faith was most intense, these regulations, as we have said, were not observed with anything like exactitude. Far less than any positive disbelief in dogma, was hatred of such restraints the real lever of the Protestant movement in the sixteenth century. Neither the various princes who embraced the Protestant cause, nor those who followed them, cared one straw about dogma; finely-spun distinctions between transubstantiation and consubstantiation, incomprehensible controversies regarding the doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, would never have sufficed to excite enthusiasm among a population sunk in ignorance, unable for the most part even to read or write, and most certainly incapable of grasping any abstract notions, however simple—and the abstract notions contained in these Christian dogmas (*i.e.* transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the Mass) are extremely complicated. How are we to suppose such purely intellectual problems to be accessible to the understanding of ignorant and semi-barbaric populations? And even if we were to admit such an impossibility, can it for a moment be supposed that merely intellectual problems are capable of provoking enthusiasm or fury—of kindling those passions that burst forth with such amazing, such uncontrollable violence, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?

And when we come to view more closely other similar movements against the Church—such as the philosophical and libertine movement of the eighteenth century, or the Revolution of 1789-1794, or the anticlerical agitation in Latin countries at the present day—we see the same forces at work, directed

towards the accomplishment of the same purpose—namely, the liberation of the individual from the servitude imposed by galling and irksome restraints. The philosophers of the eighteenth century and of the Revolution, as also the anti-clerical agitators of to-day, make no secret of their aims. The comedies of Beaumarchais and Marivaux served to popularise the contempt for chastity and for conjugal fidelity, openly expressed in the *salons* dominated by the ideas of Voltaire and Diderot, of d'Holbach and d'Alembert. The Revolution was the most formidable explosion of passion and instinct "run amuck" that the annals of human history have ever recorded. Here we have the spectacle, indeed, of a disintegrated society, without tradition, without solidarity, without authority, without anything—of a society unable to check the riot of individual instincts and passions, unable to place the slightest restraint on the individual, who, henceforth abandoned to his own devices, appears transformed into an animal of some untamed and inferior species. And as for the anticlerical movement of to-day, the motives inspiring it are obvious to any one who is at all acquainted with the psychology of the masses, to any one who has come into closer contact with the latter, who knows their ideals—to any one who has studied even cursorily the revolutionary movement in contemporary society.

The Christian doctrine relating to marriage constitutes an excellent example of the reunion of the two ideas of equality and inequality, which we have already seen, in the second and fourth chapters, to be characteristic of the sociological teaching of Christianity in general. The wife is to be subject to the husband, is to obey the husband; and yet husband and wife are absolutely equal before the Moral Law. The social inequalities which prevail in this finite world of ours are necessarily reflected in the family, which is a miniature society. Husband and wife are not equal before the social

law, because the social value of the work performed by each is different; and to the difference in the social value of their respective labour must be added the difference of physiological strength between the two. The husband is the head of the family in virtue of a natural law which applies to all species, because he is the stronger, because it is to him that incumbs the duty of supporting wife and children; the social value of the husband's labour, in civilised society, is necessarily higher than the social value of the wife's, seeing that it is the husband's labour which permits the wife, in her turn, to work and to accomplish her domestic duties—seeing, also, that the husband's labour likewise contributes to the maintenance and welfare of society as a whole. It is for this reason that St. Paul enjoins on wives the duty of submission to their husbands: *Mulieres viris suis subditae sint, sicut Domino: quoniam vir caput est mulieris, sicut Christus caput est Ecclesiae. . . . Sicut Ecclesia subjecta est Christo, ita et mulieres viris suis in omnibus.* But the Apostle hastens to add: *Viri diligite uxores vestras, sicut et Christus dilexit Ecclesiam. . . . Viri debent diligere uxores suas ut corpora sua. Qui suam uxorem diligit, seipsum diligit.* And the duty of the husband is strongly insisted on by Jesus: *Dimittet homo patrem et matrem, et adhaerebit uxori suae, et erunt duo in carne una.* Jesus is careful to drive home with especial force the idea of the essential, indissoluble unity of husband and wife, and he repeats the beautiful words, *Jam non sunt duo, sed una caro.* If they be thus one person, necessarily must the husband love his wife and care for her, seeing that, as St. Paul remarks, *nemo carnem suam odio habuit, sed nutrit et fovet eam.*

Obviously the notion of the equality of husband and wife before the Moral Law must efficaciously safeguard the rights of the weaker party, that is to say, of the wife; just as, in the case of society as a whole, the equality of all the social classes before the Moral Law, serves to protect the inferior

classes, to guarantee the latter against an abuse of power on the part of the more powerful classes. The effect of the unique combination, in Christian doctrine, of the notions of relative inequality and of absolute equality, is always the same, whether it be applied to society as a whole, or to any of the subdivisions of society. The laws prevailing in this finite and relative world are recognised; while at the same time a higher meaning is given to them. These laws must receive an ethical interpretation, if they are to fulfil their purpose, which is that of ensuring social welfare. The great law of inequality, however necessary, however immutable it may be as regards this finite world, will, if it be left destitute of any moral sanction, lead to social disintegration, and through social disintegration to social annihilation. Inequality of strength, inequality of power, must conduce to egotism and abuse of such strength on the part of the strong, to corresponding egotism, to hatred and discontent, on the part of the weak. Only when inequality is tempered by the ideas of Duty and Responsibility, can we hope to see that great natural and social law operate in such a manner that society derive advantage from it. The equilibrium between the various unequal elements composing society, which Christianity realised, permits of natural law fulfilling its indispensable function in social life; for only when society is sufficiently integrated can it support the action of natural law—even as only a robust organism can support hard work or violent exercise.

Having assured the fulfilment, by husband and wife, of their mutual duties towards each other, Christianity is careful to ensure that both fulfil, linked as they are henceforth by ties of indissoluble solidarity, their duties towards their offspring. St. Paul declares that those who neglect their children are worse than any infidels: *Si quis autem suorum et domesticorum curam non habet, fidem negavit et est infideli deterior*, are the severe words he uses. Jesus insists more than once on the

rights and dignities of the children, to whom he issued the invitation: *Sinite parvulos venire ad me.* And why are the little children to come to him, why does Jesus particularly invite them? *Talium est enim regnum caelorum*—to them does the kingdom of Heaven, which Jesus came to preach, belong. Unless his disciples become like unto a little child, obedient, pure, and innocent, they shall not enter the promised land. As to those who are guilty of corrupting the innocence or of destroying the faith of "one of these little ones," it would be better for them, declared Jesus, that a millstone be hanged around their neck and that they be drowned. But the innocence of the child need not be corrupted by any positive act—it is not necessary that parents or others deliberately lead the child into temptation, deliberately push it into the path of vice: negative culpability suffices—it is enough if, by their neglect, by their indifference, by their bad example, the parents have caused the child to lose its innocence or its faith. It is in order to safeguard yet more efficaciously the interests of the child that the Church has instituted "godparents," that is to say persons who are directly responsible, before the Church, for the moral and material welfare of the infant—persons who, being "parents in God," have the duty imposed on them of aiding and assisting the natural parents, or of replacing the latter should these neglect their responsibilities. With the decline of faith, the office of godparent has come to lose all practical meaning; the acceptance of it signifies to-day nothing but the fulfilment of an empty formality for the sake of obliging a friend. When the godparent has given a silver cup or some other present to his *protégé*, the former considers his duties at an end. But we must not judge of the office of godparent in the light of its present-day decadence. We must recollect that this institution was created by the Church in order that the interests of the child might be more efficaciously safe-

guarded—that its creation was due to the maternal solicitude of the Church for the welfare of those who cannot care for themselves, and of whom Jesus declared to his disciples that *theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.* And the acceptance of the post implied grave and onerous responsibilities, responsibilities on which the Catholic Church particularly insists in the exhortation with which the priest terminates the ceremony of baptism :—

"The Church reminds you, first of all, that, vigilant guardians of the faith and purity of this child, you share with its parents the grave responsibility of its Christian education. You will have, therefore, to see that the child is instructed in time of the truths of religion and of its duty as a Christian. You will be careful always to help and assist it by your advice, your prayers, and your good example. . . . The Church, in her maternal solicitude, goes yet further: she entreats you, in the interest of this child, to be careful that it be confided only to a Catholic nurse, whose morals are pure, should its mother be unable to nourish it; and, later, you will have to see that the child is handed over to the care of Christian teachers and masters.

"The Church enjoins on you, also, the duty of taking every precaution so as to preserve this child from all danger, and to protect it from all accidents, until it has attained the age at which it can protect itself. . . . You will preserve, before God, safe and sound, pure and innocent, this little child that our Holy Religion confides to your affection and to your piety."

The godparents are thus what their name implies them to be: the spiritual guardians of the child, responsible for the latter's moral and material welfare. Immense is their responsibility before the Moral Law, before God, to whom they will have to render strict account of their stewardship. But the responsibility of the godparents by no means excludes that of the natural parents: the one merely supplements

the other. The godparents are an extra safeguard, the counsellors of the parents, those to whom incumbs the task of seeing that the parents fulfil their duties. The parents are not allowed to resign their powers into the hands of the godparents; parental responsibility is, on the contrary, a responsibility that can never, under any circumstances whatsoever, be evaded. It is, therefore, the parents who have to fulfil the parental duties. Only in the case of the parents proving themselves unworthy of their high and sacred mission, must the godparents execute the task which should be performed by the parents. It was to prevent the innocent offspring from suffering from the effects of parental unworthiness and parental neglect, that the Church created the institution of godparents—but let not parents imagine that this institution was created in order to permit them to evade their own responsibilities.

## II

If society as a whole be disintegrated; if the bonds of social cohesion in general be loosened; we may expect to find the family likewise disintegrated, the bonds of family life similarly loosened. The disintegration of society is a malady that implies the disintegration of the various elements composing society: that is to say the cessation, by such divers elements, of the fulfilment of the social functions in view of which they were evolved. The family, as we have said, is a miniature society; and the disintegration of this miniature society cannot but produce the disintegration of the larger society—even as social disintegration in its turn points to a disintegration of the family. If the individual be not strongly integrated in the family, neither will he be integrated in society as a whole; if he be not conscious of his duties and responsibilities in the family, he will not be conscious of his duties and

responsibilities towards society. No society can hope to be strong if the family be weak—even as no individual can hope to be strong if he be afflicted with a weak heart. For the family is by far the most efficacious of all the social subdivisions, such as the class, the profession, the syndicate, the corporation, etc., the function of which is to adapt the individual to social life by integrating him in a group to which he is attached by ties of especial affection or interest—society as a whole being, as we saw in a previous chapter, too large, too far removed from the individual, to be able to influence him sufficiently.

The family differs from other social subdivisions, such as the corporation or the syndicate, in that the integration of the individual in the former implies *ipso facto* his integration in society; whereas, as we have seen in a previous chapter, the integration of the individual in his corporation or syndicate is by no means necessarily synonymous with the subordination of individual ends to social ends. The family can never become an instrument of social disintegration, such as the corporation or the syndicate become, if the egotistical sentiments in the individual gain the upper hand over the social sentiments. The duties which incumb on the individual as parent or spouse or child, are such as necessarily fit him to be a good citizen; and this is not necessarily the case with the duties performed by an individual towards his corporation or his syndicate. The family is the school in which the individual cannot fail to learn the great notion of Duty—in which he cannot fail to learn what Responsibility means and what Submission and Discipline mean—in which he cannot fail to restrain his egotism, to subordinate the latter to supra-individual ends. Whereas the corporation or the syndicate can be converted into means for satisfying egotism, for gratifying individual desires at the expense of society; the constitution of the family and the duties incumbing to each of its members, are such as to prove a salutary check on

egotism. For the members of the family are linked together by ties *sui generis*—ties at once of a physiological and a psychological nature, which do not exist between the members of any other group, of any other organisation. Hence the supreme importance of maintaining intact these ties, of maintaining intact the family structure, without which the family functions cannot be performed.

These truths are elementary. And yet how greatly are they neglected to-day! The egotism so rampant in our times has not failed to gangrene family life—has not failed to make the duties and responsibilities of family life appear irksome and meaningless. Marriage tends ever more and more to become a mere business contract, a mere means whereby individual ends may be more easily attained, whereby individual interests may be more easily served. The great *social* import of marriage, the fundamental *social* significance of family life, tend to be ever more and more ignored. The mercantilism and mammonolatry of *bourgeois* society has corroded family life, as it has corroded everything else. It is a proverbial saying in France that *l'homme n'épouse pas la femme, mais la dot.* The man marries in order that the money of his wife may assist him in his career; and the wife marries in order that she may share the honours of her husband's social situation. In Latin countries it is usual for parents to marry their daughters; it is exceptional that the daughters marry themselves, *i.e.* choose themselves their future husbands. The conditions which Molière never ceased to rail against still exist in France; if parents have no longer the legal power to compel their children to marry against their will, or to prevent their children from marrying according to the latter's wishes—the tradition still remains almost unmodified: and tradition, the unwritten law, can at times be as powerful as, if not more powerful than, the written code. But, in France, things are

rendered even worse by the facilities which are to-day afforded for divorce. The number of unhappy marriages contracted formerly was assuredly not less than it is to-day; but marriage being formerly indissoluble, the integrity of the family was better guaranteed, the interests of the children were better safeguarded. Husband and wife, being bound to each other by a legal tie that they could not sever, were compelled, as is vulgarly said, "to make the best of a bad job"—compelled to adapt themselves to the circumstances, compelled to restrain in a certain degree their egotism, compelled to make certain efforts to arrive at an understanding, in their own interests. Whereas to-day, if things go wrong, if disagreements crop up, no sort of restraint on individual desires is necessary, no sort of effort over oneself is required: for the marriage can be undone almost as easily as it is contracted.

If mammonolatry has corrupted family life; if the tendency to see in marriage a mere business matter, a mere financial transaction, has degraded the institution, and obscured the notion of the fundamental social import of the latter; yet is such mammonolatry, such a tendency to reduce even the highest things in life to a question of cash, but symptomatic of the underlying social disease of egotism. Egotism being rampant, it cannot be expected that marriage be considered otherwise than as a means for gratifying egotistical desires. Egotism throws the individual back upon himself, limits the world to the individual personality—effaces consequently all idea of social duty and responsibility. Under these conditions it is but natural that marriage should be contracted without the slightest regard being paid to the social aspect of marriage, to the social repercussions, to the social consequences that an unwise and imprudent marriage may entail. It being, in many countries, easy to obtain a dissolution of marriage, the individual finds his personal interests safeguarded — finds himself protected personally

against the possible disagreeable consequences of an unwise marriage; and he has not a moment to spare, wherein to consider the larger interests of society. Divorce having been introduced solely with a view to safeguarding the interests of the individual, it is but natural that divorce should, in its turn, engender egotism and develop the latter. There where divorce does not exist, where there is consequently less possibility for the individual to escape the effects of his own actions, the individual will be driven to reflect more before taking so momentous a decision as that on which the happiness of a life-time depends; or, should he nevertheless omit to reflect beforehand on the consequences, *he will have to accept these consequences*—he will have, therefore, as we have already observed, if his existence is to be tolerable, to adapt himself to the circumstances; and this adaptation implies a certain self-restraint, a certain check on egotism, a certain mastery over oneself. When the individual finds himself compelled to practise the precept: *Medice, cura teipsum*—when he can have recourse to no artificial means whereby the consequences of his actions may be escaped from; he will necessarily, in his own interest, have to seek to effect some sort of reconciliation between his desires and his duties—he will have, consequently, to sacrifice some of his desires.

But it must not for a moment be thought that the mere suppression of divorce implies a suppression of the disease of which divorce is but one of the symptoms. Even if divorce be not legally possible, family life can be none the less disintegrated. No one will pretend, for instance, that family life is more stable in Italy, where divorce is unknown, than it is in Germany, where divorce is obtainable. The disintegration of family life is due to the prevalence of egotism; and egotism is a moral malady that the law is wholly incapable of curing, even though a bad law be able to develop the evil. That which it is urgently necessary to

combat in the interest of society, is the conception according to which marriage is solely an institution whereby individual interests and individual pleasures may be satisfied. The great truth to be grasped, and which is so much neglected, is that marriage is a social institution which exists primarily for the benefit of society, and only secondarily for the benefit of the individual. It ensues that marriage should be entered into with a view to fulfilling certain fundamental social duties. Only when we consider marriage as a social institution, can we understand the extraordinary efforts invariably made by all religions without exception to regulate and control marriage laws and customs; for if marriage were not an eminently social institution, it is evident that religion would not be thus interested in its maintenance and stability. But it is precisely this social aspect of marriage that is so widely neglected at the present day. And mark the lamentable consequences of such a miscomprehension of the meaning of marriage! On the one hand, moral dissensions resulting from the union of persons wholly unadapted to each other—moral dissensions pregnant with evil consequences for the education of the children, and which cannot but loosen the bonds of family solidarity, even if they do not lead directly to the break-up of the family. On the other hand, the most deplorable neglect of those biological laws on the strict observance of which the ultimate welfare and survival of society depend. If we are to-day seriously menaced by biological regression, this is due to the culpable negligence of biological law—to the criminal light-heartedness with which marriages are contracted between persons wholly unfit to beget offspring, and who thereby burden society with ever-increasing numbers of worthless and degenerate members.

The deplorable lack of foresight among the lower classes, as regards the consequences of marriage, is proverbial; and the results of such lack of foresight are palpable. But the lack of

foresight is scarcely less great, and infinitely less excusable, among the higher classes. We could cite the case of a wealthy French solicitor, himself a man who was biologically fit, but whose criminal egotism led him to engender a numerous family of hopelessly degenerate individuals. His first wife, a dipsomaniac, had to be shut up in an asylum; the child issue from the marriage set the house on fire deliberately, and had likewise to be shut up. The second and third wives were likewise hereditarily degenerate, and both of them dipsomaniacs. No less than twelve children were born of the two marriages, the one more worthless than the other. Two sons got into trouble with the police, and had to be sent to America, where they both came to a bad end. Four daughters are imbecile, another son is in an asylum. Here, then, we have an educated and cultured man guilty of putting a number of hopelessly degenerate children into the world, of bequeathing to society a number of dangerous enemies, without even a thought as to the ultimate consequences of his acts. Such a man is a far more dangerous criminal even than the *apache* who stabs the passer-by under cover of the darkness. He has not a thought for the misery which he inflicts on a number of beings who most certainly did not ask to be born; and he has not a thought for the ultimate consequences resulting to society from the reproduction, in their turn, of his degenerate and worthless offspring. We cite this case, known to us personally, as an example of the criminal lack of foresight to be found, as regards marriage and its consequences, among those classes of society reputed to be cultured. How can we then wonder at the lack of foresight prevailing among the uncultured and uneducated classes? And this lack of foresight is due to the prevalence of egotism, to the prevalence of that pernicious conception of marriage which sees in the latter a mere means for satisfying individual interests of one kind or another—to that absolutely false conception according to which the social

import of marriage, the social duties imposed by marriage, are entirely ignored.

And the moral consequences of the prevalence of this egotistical conception of marriage are not less deplorable, not less dangerous for the ultimate welfare of society, than the biological consequences. When persons who are biologically fit contract marriage solely with a view to satisfying interests of an egotistical nature, the danger for social stability, for social solidarity, is not less evident than when biologically unfit persons marry and burden society with a number of degenerate and worthless citizens. For biological fitness, indispensable as it is, is not the only condition on which social welfare depends; the *social* (*i.e.* moral) fitness of its citizens is not less important for society. And in a family torn asunder by moral dissensions, in a family lacking in that solidarity which constitutes the essence of family life, how are the parents to be educated, how are they to be taught the great social duties of co-operation, of self-sacrifice, and of self-restraint? How are the children to learn the great social duty of submission, how are they to learn the necessity of refraining in early years the egotism naturally so strong in a yet insufficiently socialised being? Unless the family be strongly integrated, the individuals composing it will never learn the great and fundamental social duties which alone family life can adequately inculcate; and the family cannot be integrated, its cohesion and solidarity cannot be assured, unless husband and wife be fully conscious of their common duties and of their common responsibilities, unless they regard married life as constituting a solemn stewardship, of which they have to render account to society.

The great service rendered by the Church lies precisely in its recognition of the great social import of marriage, in its having sanctified marriage, and imposed duties that cannot be evaded on those who contract it—duties towards each other,

duties towards their children, duties towards society. There can be no doubt whatever that those who accept the lofty teaching of the Church as regards marriage, who consider marriage to be, in the words of the liturgy, "a sacrament instituted in the interests of the reproduction of the human species"—that such as these are more likely to found a family which shall be adapted to its social function of fitting the individual for social life, than those who regard marriage merely as a means for satisfying physiological desires or financial interests. The very fact of marriage being a sacrament, imposes on those who accept the teaching of the Church the duty of ample reflection before receiving this solemn sacrament. And how earnestly does the Church enjoin on husband and wife the duty of mutual attachment, of mutual fidelity, of mutual love—the duty of bearing one another's faults with patience, of sacrificing their egotistical desires for the common good—the duty of rearing their children in such a manner that the latter shall grow up to be, in their turn, good soldiers of Christ and good citizens of society. The fulfilment of mutual duties—such is the keynote of the teaching of the Church as regards marriage. The fulfilment of mutual duties, which implies the sacrifice of egotism for an end that is outside the individual and superior to the individual! It is by means of this doctrine that the Church guarantees the stability of family life, that the Church seeks to make of the family a school wherein the individual may learn to play the part that incumbs to him in the wider life of society. The family is a great school, a school of duty, wherein each one learns the meaning of the word responsibility. There is no higher doctrine than this, no doctrine more eminently adapted to social requirements.

How much loftier, how much worthier, is this doctrine of the Catholic Church, than the contrary doctrine so greatly in favour to-day, and according to which marriage is nothing

but a business contract, or a simple formality to be gone through before sexual desires can be satisfied! In both these cases, consideration is given exclusively to the interests of the two persons contracting marriage; and no thought is given to the many duties imposed by marriage: to the duties of mutual love, mutual forbearance, mutual patience, mutual sacrifice—to the numerous and grave duties of parents towards their children. The consequence of the prevalence of this egotistical conception of marriage, is that the latter is too frequently contracted by persons totally unadapted to each other; and the family, far from being a school of moral training and moral discipline, becomes a school of discord and anarchy. Or else, the physiological desire having been satisfied, it is found after a time that satiety sets in, and that a marriage which has no more stable basis than a physical basis is a marriage founded upon the sand. Here also, dissension or at any rate the indifference which is a fruit of satiety, must render the family incapable of fulfilling the social functions, in view of the performance of which it exists. And when it ceases to fulfil its social functions, the family as such ceases to exist—henceforth there is a group of individuals linked by physiological ties, but who are no longer united by those moral ties which constitute the essence of the family in civilised society, and which differentiate the social family from the biological family.

The egotistical view of marriage, the view that sees in marriage an institution existing for the benefit of the individual and not for the benefit of society, was nowhere preached with greater talent and with greater frankness than in Ibsen's famous drama, *The Doll's House.* Because Norah has been deceived in her husband, because the latter turns out to be a contemptible and low-minded creature, because Norah, after this discovery, suddenly becomes conscious of the fact that she has been leading a meaningless and valueless existence; for all

these reasons she decides to abandon, not only her husband, but also her children, although the latter can certainly not be rendered responsible for the father's conduct. She will leave the house in order to pursue her own education, in order to develop herself, in order to give—by her own efforts—a meaning and a value to her existence. She will no longer consent to "rot" in the poisoned atmosphere of her husband's house, she will go out into the world in the search for light, for ever more light. And when it is objected to her that she should not leave her children, she replies that she is not worthy to educate them—that she must first go out into the world and create an ideal for herself that shall give a meaning and a value to life, before she can think of undertaking the education of her children.

The conduct of Norah would be justifiable if she had only her husband; but it becomes monstrous by the fact of her having children. She, who declares the atmosphere of her husband's house to be so pestilential that she cannot possibly breathe it any longer; she, who maintains that no possibility of human evolution is to be sought for in such an environment; she is content to leave her children in this poisoned atmosphere, in this unwholesome environment—she is ready to leave them to be educated and cared for by a man whom she despises, and very justly despises! Truly is Norah the type of the woman suffering from the disease of *individualism*, of the woman blinded by egotism to the extent of not being able to perceive her most elementary duties as mother. The doctrine enunciated in Ibsen's drama is the most pernicious of doctrines—a doctrine which, like all such individualist theories, must lead, if put into practice, to the disruption of society. As against doctrines such as these, Christianity proclaims the necessity of sacrificing one's interests to one's duties, the necessity of enduring much in order to attain thereby to the realisation of an end that is outside the individual and

superior to him. The end to which the wife must sacrifice herself, if her husband be unworthy, is the child; if the husband be debarred, by his indignity, from demanding the submission of the wife, yet is the latter not only a wife but also a mother. In Ibsen's drama the rights of the woman, of the wife, take precedence of the duties of the mother; in the doctrine of the Church the contrary is the case—the development of the individual personality must not be allowed to take precedence of the needs of society, the individual may develop his personality only in so far as such development does not go contrary to the wider interests of the collectivity. There where individual interests and social interests clash, the individual interests must be sacrificed; for it is by such sacrifices that social existence is conditioned.

Even as the family is a miniature reproduction of society; so does the Christian doctrine concerning the family reproduce the Christian doctrine concerning society as a whole. In the same way that Christianity realises a synthesis between the various classes composing society, so does it likewise realise a synthesis between the various members composing the family—even as the former synthesis is constituted by means of the notion of Duty, so is the latter synthesis also so constituted. Father, mother, and child, husband and wife—each has its Duties and its Rights; but the rights are correlative of the duties, and are conditioned by them: just as each class has its Duties and its Rights, the duties being always strictly proportionate to the rights, and the former increasing invariably with the latter. The parent has greater rights because it has greater responsibilities, more difficult duties, than the child; the husband has rights that the wife has not, because the former has also responsibilities and duties that the latter has not. And, in the same way, if the upper classes, the superior elements whose mission it is to govern and to guide society, have greater rights than the inferior multitude

who are governed, it is only because the former are saddled with onerous responsibilities, and because the most arduous of tasks is assigned them. In the family as in society as a whole, we see the same admirable Christian doctrine to prevail—the doctrine of the equilibrium of interests, whereby Duty and Right are correlative notions.

Even as this doctrine of the equilibrium of interests is but an aspect of the wider doctrine of the necessity of sacrificing egotism to supra-individual aims; so also do we find the fundamental anti-egotistical teaching of Christianity applicable alike to the whole society and to the family. Even as the individual is to sacrifice individual interests, and the class to sacrifice class interests, both in order to further the welfare of society; so is the individual, considered as member of a family, to sacrifice himself for the family, his rights to his duties. It is in the family and through the family that the individual learns to sacrifice egotism—in the family and through the family that he learns to become a useful citizen of society, that he learns, consequently, to rise beyond the limits of his personality, to increase the value of life by giving to life an end that is exterior to the individual, that is not confined within the narrow frontiers of individuality. The whole teaching of the Church with regard to marriage inculcates the supreme duty of self-sacrifice. When the man has taken unto himself a wife, he is *ipso facto* no longer a mere individual; his individuality has extended itself, he forms henceforth with his wife one flesh, the two atoms have fusioned, each finds henceforth in the other its extension, its completion, its aim, and its value. And once his individuality has been extended in this manner, the individual may under no circumstances reduce it to its former narrow limits; under no circumstances may he seek to evade the duties and responsibilities freely accepted by him. In order that the individual may not be burdened with duties and responsibilities, to

accomplish which he is incapable; in order that he may not be able to pretext that such duties were thrust upon him by exterior compulsion, and that he therefore cannot be expected to continue to fulfil them; in order to prevent this, the Church has always insisted with particular force on the liberty of marriage, has always held the freely-given consent to be sufficient to validate marriage, has always condemned and repudiated the use of compulsion, or of any undue pressure, by parents or others.

Thus when the individual has been married, he has crossed the limits of his individuality; his life is no longer an individual life, but a social life. And when the new family has been increased by the advent of children, then does the already extended personality of each of the parents extend still further; then does the individuality of each parent no longer include only the individuality of the other parent, so to speak, but it henceforth includes likewise the individuality of each child. Along with this continual extension of his individuality, goes a continual extension of the individual's duties and responsibilities. The family, as we have said, is the great school of duty, the great school of preparation for social life, the great school in which the sacrifice of egotism to higher ideals is perpetually inculcated.

Once having entered the gates of this school, there is no going back; once the individual has socialised himself by the foundation of a family, he may not de-socialise himself, he may not return to his pre-socialised individualistic condition, he may not evade the responsibilities once assumed. For if it were thus permissible for the individual to throw overboard the discipline he has once and for all imposed on himself, what would be the use and value of this discipline? The school of discipline is a hard school, the road of self-sacrifice is a thorny and difficult one; but the individual can only be fully adapted to social life, he can only be fully adapted to

his social mission, when he has passed right through the school, when he continued along the road up to the end, without turning back. *Ne tenta, aut perfice*—such is the motto inspiring the teaching of the Church: to commence a task without achieving it, is useless; and it were better if it never were commenced. Life is real, and life is earnest—and life is too real and too earnest for it to be considered as a mere series of experiments whereby the individual may attain to purely individual happiness, or whereby he may more fully develop his powers in the interests of the *ego*.

The condemnation and prohibition of divorce is thus entirely in harmony with the whole teaching of Christianity—teaching that never ceases to inculcate the necessity of the sacrifice of egotism. The rupture of the marriage-tie can be considered profitable only from the point of view of the egotistical interests of the individual. It is a direct encouragement to the individual to evade responsibilities which he has solemnly taken upon himself. It is sapping the foundations of the great and unique school of social training that the family constitutes. It is permitting the individual to shirk his duties and to escape the difficulties that he must needs learn to support if he is to become a citizen in the true sense of the word. It was impossible that the Catholic Church, which combats with such unceasing energy the development of egotism under all its forms, could permit divorce. It was only natural, on the other hand, that the Protestant movement of the sixteenth century, and the revolutionary movement of our times, which is the legitimate intellectual child of Protestantism, should both of them be favourable to divorce—seeing that both are engendered by the revolt of the individual against social authority.

Unceasingly and unremittingly does the Catholic Church combat egotism; and the entire doctrine of the Church regarding the sexual life of the individual, whether in married

life or outside married life, is founded upon the fundamental idea of the necessity of curbing individual desires and passions. The difference between the eminently social nature of Catholicism, and the individualist nature of Protestantism, is nowhere better shown up than in their respective attitudes towards the sexual life of the individual. Protestantism attaches no importance whatsoever to chastity; it permits its ministers to marry; it contents itself with condemning adultery, but apparently attaches little importance, if any, to the sexual intercourse of unmarried persons. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, enjoins strict chastity on its priests —prohibits these from satisfying, under any conditions, the most imperious instinct of the human being; and not only does it condemn adultery, but attaches to all sexual intercourse outside the married state a moral stigma. And to this rule it knows no derogation. The extreme rigour of this Catholic discipline appears frequently unjustifiable and unnecessary; for it is generally admitted that the satisfaction of sexual desires on the part of the unmarried man is not by any means reprehensible, seeing that it is only natural. But we must not judge of the disciplinary rules of Catholicism in this matter from the standpoint of the individual—any more than we must judge of religious beliefs and religious institutions in general from that standpoint. As we have already observed, beliefs and institutions which appear meaningless or absurd from the individual point of view, take on a very deep significance when we consider them from the standpoint of society and of social interests. And thus is it with the disciplinary rules of Catholicism affecting the sexual life of the individual. It is not the physiological sexual act, in itself entirely insignificant, which the Church condemns. What the Church condemns is the satisfaction of egotistical desires; what the Church aims at, is the rigorous subordination of the individual to a higher power than himself — the rigorous

repression of egotism under any shape or form. As egotism manifests itself most strongly and most virulently in the sexual instinct, therefore does the Church seek, by all the means in its power, to repress that instinct, to curb it, to discipline it, to regulate it. As a total prohibition of sexual intercourse is impossible, so does the Church seek to regulate that intercourse, thereby adapting a fundamentally egotistical instinct to social needs.

We see once more, by this example, how impossible it is to judge of a religious system, to understand a religious system, when we consider the latter from the standpoint of the individual and of individual interests. Regulations which appear wholly unnecessary when viewed from such a standpoint, appear necessary when viewed from the standpoint of society. The whole institution of marriage, which is essentially —even in the most advanced stages of culture, for instance in Greece and Rome — a religious institution, is entirely incomprehensible from the individual point of view. The only justification of marriage, and of all marriage regulations, is to be found in their social necessity. It is thus solely from the point of view of their social necessity that we must judge the disciplinary rules, whereby the Church seeks to regulate the sexual life of the individual. Only when we understand that the condemnation of sexual intercourse outside married life is but a means to an end—a means whereby egotism may more efficaciously be curbed, more efficaciously be placed under restraint: only then does such a condemnation come to possess a meaning. Meaningless when judged of from the standpoint of the individual, this condemnation then appears in the light of a safeguard of social interests.

We may say, then, that in its whole conception of family life; in the protection afforded to the wife, as to the weaker party, by the condemnation of the husband's adultery, and by the doctrine of the indissolubility of the marriage-tie; by its

insistence on the mutual duties of husband and wife, and on the duties of both towards their children; and in its having made of the family a great school of duty and responsibility, a great school of preparation for social life: Christianity, and particularly Catholic Christianity, has proved itself an invaluable factor of social integration and social stability, which can only be assured by the integration and stability of the family.

## CHAPTER VII

### STRUGGLE AND SUFFERING

A CURSORY study of human history will suffice to convince any one of the fact, that that history is one long record of struggle and suffering. It is through endless struggles, through incalculable suffering, that humanity has slowly emerged from barbarism and ascended the ladder of civilisation. The road along which it has passed, in its long march, is strewn with the ruins of societies once great and flourishing, now extinct—is strewn with the dry bones which alone remain to tell the tale of former magnificence and power. Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Carthage, Greece, Rome, Peru, Mexico—such are some among the names that we meet with—names which evoke visions of splendour and might and glory that contrast with the sombre spectacle of later decline and decadence. And who shall ever know of the countless number of inferior societies totally exterminated in the course of the merciless and universal conflict which resumes the entire history of mankind—who shall ever know of the myriads of individuals ruthlessly sacrificed to the exigencies of social evolution, ruthlessly immolated to what we term progress? Truly does progress appear in the light of an insatiable Moloch, thirsting for blood, and whose lust of carnage and destruction can never be stilled.

All life is conditioned by struggle; no organism, whether

biological or social, can escape the working of this inexorable law. Excessive fertility, on the one hand, limited space and limited means of subsistence, on the other, must invariably engender conflict—and it is by means of conflict that the fitter, that is to say those better adapted to environing conditions, are selected, are enabled to survive. Without conflict, no progress, organic or social, would be possible; for without conflict there would be no elimination of the inferior. The evolution of life in general, of which the evolution of society is but an aspect, is thus governed by an iron law that takes no account of the individual, that uses the individual only as a tool wherewith supra-individual, collective interests may be better served—by a law that unswervingly pursues one unique goal, which is the maintenance, not of individual life, but of the life of the collectivity—by a law which, having the furtherance of collective interests as its sole aim, is pitiless in its operation as regards the individual, whom it sacrifices ruthlessly to a higher end, regardless of the suffering produced. *The progress of the species, be it biological or social, is conditioned by the suffering of the individual.* Such is the great law that dominates the history of all life.

It is obvious that the development of rationalism, which has as its result the differentiation of the individual from the collectivity, the development of the individual personality, and the consequent insistence on individual rights; cannot but engender the desire, on the part of the individual, to put an end to a struggle productive of so much suffering for the latter. When the personality of the individual comes to detach itself from the collectivity, when a value *per se* is attributed to that personality, irrespective of its value as a mere instrument for furthering social welfare: then must the consciousness of his individuality tend to place the individual in antagonism to all the laws of nature, which latter operate exclusively in view of the welfare of the collectivity. The rise of the spirit of

rationalism, together with the growth of egotism which is its consequence, create therefore a dangerous antinomy between the individual and natural law; as the latter is superior to the individual, so will the latter be vanquished in the struggle—and being vanquished is, in this case, synonymous with being annihilated. If, in a society of rational individuals, the formerly omnipotent collective representations come to lose all their force and influence; and if, as a consequence of the ensuing social disintegration, the individuals are enabled to create artificial conditions of existence responding to individual needs instead of to social needs; so will the whole society, after a short time, be necessarily eliminated by rival societies, whose integration is still intact, thanks to the prevalence of collective representations sufficiently strong to limit rationalism, and to subordinate the individual to collective ends.

The whole history of life, the whole process of organic evolution, cannot but appear to us, when we seek to fathom their inner significance, when we seek to discover a purpose in them, in the light of inexplicable mysteries. Did the development of the higher forms of life entail the elimination of the lower, then might we be able to ascribe an aim to evolution, then might we be able to find a purpose in the latter. Then, indeed, could we say that the purpose in question is the creation of an ever more developed, of an ever more complicated, organic type. But the evolution of higher biological forms has not entailed the elimination of the lower ones—the evolution of the Vertebrata has not caused the disappearance of the Invertebrata, any more than the evolution of the Metazoa in general has had the elimination of the Protozoa as a result. Man co-exists with the Amœba, even as the Anthropoid apes co-exist with the Lemurians. It becomes thus impossible to assign to Evolution the creation of a higher organic type as its aim and purpose. All we can say is that *within each species the superior individuals survive.* But when

we take the whole domain of life, the entire Biosphere, into consideration, we do not find any such universal law prevailing. True, when two species enter into conflict; or when the habitat of a species changes rapidly and suddenly; then will the weaker of the two conflicting species be eliminated—then will the species incapable of adapting itself promptly enough to the changed environment, be likewise eliminated. But the very fact of the persistence of the lower forms of life all through the long history of biological evolution, shows clearly that no universal law exists, applicable to the Biosphere as a whole, and according to which such lower forms are necessarily eliminated by higher and more recently developed forms.

The relentless extermination of inferior forms of life is thus an universal law *only within the limits of the species.* And, again, we must not forget that "inferior" and "superior," "higher" and "lower," are purely relative notions, which express purely and simply the degree of adaptation of an organism to environing conditions. We employ the expressions "inferior" and "superior" in default of any better ones; but we must beware of attaching any absolute value to them. And we seek in vain for any satisfactory *reason* underlying the life-history of any given species, whether considered from a dynamic or from a static point of view: why the species in question was evolved, why environing conditions should be such as to have called that species into existence, why certain qualities should ensure adaptation to those conditions, and others not—all these are problems that can be solved only from a purely relative point of view. The whole process of organic evolution, with the tremendous sacrifice of life involved by it, with the immense holocaust of individuals which it entails, appears as an insoluble riddle, when we seek to fathom its meaning and its purpose.

The human species, which is not outside Nature and superior to Nature, but which forms an integral part of Nature,

must submit to natural law under penalty of elimination if it does not do so. The development of the higher forms of rational thought, as we have already said in the second chapter, does not signify that mankind can henceforth evade natural law; it signifies that mankind can henceforth comprehend better the working of the natural laws—can consequently adapt itself to them, adapt itself to its environment, with less expenditure of its vital force; that is to say, in other words, with less expenditure of human life. In so far, therefore, does rationalism favour the interests of the individual, while at the same time not imperilling the existence of the society. But rationalism possesses an innate tendency to advance beyond this limit; based as it is on human reason, it tends invariably to an exaggerated and unilateral assertion of individual rights at the expense of social rights; unless it be controlled, as we saw in the second chapter, by an adequate collective force.

## I

When the question is asked: In what way does rationalism, by increasing our knowledge of the workings of natural law, by furthering consequently our power of adaptation to environing conditions, enable society to effect an economy of human effort, of human life?—the answer is that increase of knowledge permits of our gradually substituting a positive and rational selection for the negative selection of Nature. The latter will never cease from acting; but we can, in a large measure, render it superfluous by means of positive and rational selection. It is obvious that what we term natural selection, which is a negative process, is very costly. Every inferior organism is pitilessly exterminated; and if a society is able to withdraw itself momentarily, so to speak, from the natural order of things—if it is able, as a result of an unlimited growth of rationalism, to establish artificial conditions

whereby the inferior are allowed to multiply on equal terms with the superior; sooner or later Nature will have its revenge; and the entire society will be eliminated. Positive selection, by "selecting" exclusively the superior or eugenic elements of society for reproduction, prevents the multiplication of inferior elements; *ipso facto* does it limit the destruction of such elements, does it prevent the hecatombs of worthless organisms that appear to rational minds as such useless waste of life. It is, of course, impossible to prevent altogether the birth of inferior elements; but the number of such elements can be limited, can be reduced to a *minimum*. On the other hand, the superior elements can be systematically cultivated, can be preserved against the many dangers that assail them in the course of their existence. The social function of rationalism, as we have said, consists precisely in the development and preservation of the eugenic elements of the race. Our increased knowledge of natural laws, our increased powers of thinking, enable us to put ourselves into harmony with those laws, to conform our conduct to them, thereby avoiding the useless sacrifice of many valuable lives and much useless waste of effort. Every superior element which is lost to humanity owing to insufficient knowledge of natural law, signifies a loss of power, a loss of vital force, a consequent weakening of the species. By increasing our knowledge, by increasing our foresight, by developing our powers of thought, rationalism can prevent much useless sacrifice of valuable racial elements—can prevent, therefore, a positive loss of social force, an unnecessary weakening of social power. In this way, we repeat, does rationalism respond at once to individual and to social needs: for if, on the one hand, it economises individual life; on the other hand, it enhances considerably the society's chances of survival in the struggle for existence.

But we must constantly bear in mind that the social function of rationalism consists *in the development and*

*preservation of the eugenic elements of the race* by means of positive and reasoned selection. It does not consist in the development and preservation of inferior elements. Rationalism, however, possesses an innate tendency to overstep the limits imposed on it. Developing as it does the sense of egotism, it becomes, in the hands of the inferior elements, an instrument for eluding the workings of natural law, for preserving the useless members of society. And it frequently becomes, in the hands of the superior elements, an instrument for furthering exclusively personal aims, regardless of social interests. In every individual, the growth of rational thought engenders egotism, in that it develops the consciousness of individuality. Humanitarianism on the one hand, and what we may call *Nietzscheism* on the other: such are the results of an unlimited growth of rationalism. In both cases, the social function of rationalism is perverted; and rationalism becomes an instrument of social disintegration, instead of being an instrument of social survival.

We have seen, in the second chapter, that one of the social functions of religion consists in limiting rationalism in such a manner that the latter may be able to fulfil, in its turn, the social function incumbing on it. Humanitarianism being nothing but the egotism of the weak and inferior elements of society, it is evident that religion, the main task of which we have seen to be the repression of egotism under every shape and form in the interest of the collectivity, cannot be humanitarian—that it must, on the contrary, be an implacable adversary of humanitarianism. And, as a matter of fact, we find no trace of a humanitarian religion in history. We find, on the contrary, religion everywhere indifferent to individual suffering, everywhere imposing hardships and sacrifices of vast magnitude on the individual, everywhere exacting the rigorous subordination of individual happiness to collective welfare. Being essentially, alike as

regards its nature and as regards its aims, a collective force, we find everywhere religion at work in the service of the collectivity — everywhere actively seconding the action of that inexorable law of nature according to which the individual, regarded exclusively as an instrument whereby collective ends may be realised, is invariably immolated to such ends. As we observed in the first chapter, Christianity is the first religious system which takes any account of the individual and of individual needs; but, for all the consolation it offers to individual suffering, Christianity is not a humanitarian religion—for if it were, it would be a religion that ministers to egotism, to the egotism of the weak and inferior; whereas we know its main task to be the suppression of egotism.

*Non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium:* the words of Jesus constitute an unequivocal condemnation of the sickly humanitarianism so greatly in favour to-day in an enervated and enfeebled society. Jesus did not come to invert natural law, to preach a crusade against Nature, to awaken in the individual illusory hopes of an era of *dolce far niente*—of an era in which individual suffering should be suppressed, in which the individual should be born into the world merely to enjoy it, without any effort on his part—of an era in which the individual should be artificially protected against the natural consequences of weakness and inferiority. Jesus held out to the individual no humanitarian illusions of happiness. He never ceased, on the contrary, to insist on the necessity of suffering—not only on the fact that suffering is in itself inevitable, but also on the fact that suffering is good for the individual, that suffering is the only means whereby to attain to moral perfection. Again and again he is careful to emphasise this truth. *Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum et tollat crucem suam, et sequatur me* (Matt. xvi.); *qui non bajulat crucem suam et venit post me, non potest esse meus*

*discipulus* (Luke xiv.); *qui non accipit crucem suam et sequitur me, non est me dignus* (Matt. x.)—can anything be more emphatic than this repeated insistence, by the Master, on the duty of sacrifice and on the consequent necessity of suffering? "He who does not accept his cross and follow me, is not worthy of me"—can we find a sterner rebuke to what is commonly known as humanitarianism than that contained in these words? The individual is to take up his cross, the individual is to be always ready to sacrifice himself, always ready to immolate himself; he is not merely to accept suffering passively, when it comes to him—but he is to seek it, the aim of his life should be suffering, for through suffering alone can the individual prove his value, through suffering alone can he attain to moral perfection. It is to the individual struggling beneath the burden of his cross that the words of Dante apply: *Qui si parrà la tua nobilitate.*

There is reason to be grateful to Pope Pius X. for having reminded the world of these truths, in his Encyclica condemning the *Sillon* movement in France, in 1910. Constantly bowed down over the miseries of humanity in order to console and comfort those who weep, yet did Jesus never encourage the individual to flee from suffering, to seek to evade that inexorable law which condemns to suffering all life that is born. He showed us the way that we must follow if we wish to count ourselves among his disciples, if we wish to gain the goal of moral perfection assigned to us—the royal way of the Cross. The way of the Cross teaches us two great lessons: the necessity of bowing down before a higher law, before the divine law of suffering, before the immutable law that condemns us to suffer; and the necessity of accepting this law, not only with resignation, but with joy. The message of the Cross, the message of Calvary, is at the same time "tidings of great joy."

Conflict and suffering are thus not only recognised by

Christianity as inevitable, but also as desirable. And thereby does the message of Jesus admirably safeguard social interests —seeing that all social progress is conditioned by conflict, and consequently by individual suffering. The particular genius of Christianity resides in the fact of its making these indispensable levers of social evolution, these fundamental factors of social welfare, appear to the individual in the light of levers of individual evolution, of factors of individual welfare. Christianity was introduced into the world at a moment when the spirit of rationalism was already too far advanced, for the individual to consent any longer to sacrifice himself blindly in the interest of society. It was, as we observed in the first chapter, a momentous epoch in the history of humanity, that which marked the advent of Christianity. In order to prevent the total disruption of Western society, in order to preserve the monuments of civilisation already erected by the genius of Greece and Rome, it was necessary that religion should henceforth take account of the interests of the individual, while continuing nevertheless to fulfil its indispensable social function of maintaining intact the integration of society. For the individual had outgrown the limits formerly imposed on his individuality, individual thought had rendered itself independent of the once omnipotent collective representations. The new collective representations, the new religion, had to take account of this growth of rationalism, of this extension of individual power, of this differentiation of the individual personality. And this is precisely what Christianity did. Confronted by the double necessity of maintaining intact those conditions of conflict and suffering on which all social development depends —and of giving, on the other hand, a value to individual life commensurate with the level of rational culture already attained; Christianity reconciled these two conflicting necessities by means of the doctrine whereby *individual salvation is made*

*to depend on the very conditions on which depends social salvation.* The continuity of social existence is conditioned by society conforming itself to the great law of struggle and suffering; and the path which the individual must follow, if he is to attain to moral perfection, and, through moral perfection, to salvation, is likewise the path of struggle and suffering. Truly does the teaching of Christianity prove a profound comprehension of social necessities, and consummate knowledge of individual psychology.

In order to facilitate the obtention of the sacrifice it exacted of the individual, Christianity offered the individual a reward commensurate with the latter's efforts and sufferings. For the attainment of the goal of moral perfection is in itself insufficient, as a motive for determining the rationalised individual to pursue a line of conduct detrimental to immediate individual interests. In order to determine the individual to conform his acts to social necessities, it is necessary always to bring adequate pressure to bear on him; but, as we have already seen, mere material pressure loses its efficacity once a certain level of rational culture has been attained. It then becomes necessary to have recourse to pressure of a moral nature; and, with a wonderful comprehension of the psychology of the rationalised individuals with which it had to deal, Christianity tempered the fear of punishment with the hope of reward—it made the pressure easier to bear by promising reward to those who obeyed. The individual was incited to pursue indefatigably the path that leads to moral perfection along the road of suffering and sacrifice, because the state of moral perfection was rendered synonymous with the state of perfect bliss and perfect happiness; perseverance in the struggle meant the possibility of knowing, at last, joy untarnished by any pain; it meant the possibility of drinking of the fountain of living water that flows unto eternal life, of enjoying, in a better land, that peace which this world of ours

cannot give. *Thus the individual could attain to moral perfection, consequently to salvation, only by following a line of conduct in strict conformity with the interests of society; and, as the pursuit of the goal of moral perfection is in itself insufficient as a motive for determining the individual to sacrifice egotistical desires, therefore is he incited to pursue it by the hope of reward.* In other words, egotism is combated by an appeal to egotism; and this is, in truth, the only way in which egotism can be combated in the rationalised individual.

Jesus did not come to stand the world on its head, but to save society from imminent disruption. The latter catastrophe could only be averted if full consideration were given to the immutable laws governing social life: for the survival of society is conditioned by the strict observance of such laws. As we observed in the third chapter, had Christianity sought to invert natural law, instead of seeking to rigorously subordinate society to it, the triumph of Christian principles would have signified the final break-up of western civilisation. The latter was saved, it was reconstructed and reorganised, precisely because Christianity re-introduced the notion of natural law into a society that was ignorant of the existence of such a law. The social teaching of Christianity having thus the observance of natural law as its basis, it is evident that Christianity could favour neither equality nor humanitarianism, which are contrary to all natural law. Both these doctrines are derived from egotism; they are consequently incompatible with social existence. To suppose that Christianity, whose mission it was to maintain social integration, and so to further the chances of social survival—to suppose that it preached, or even countenanced, such egotistical and antisocial ideas, is to labour under a colossal misunderstanding as to the essence of the Christian religion.

If Christianity was careful to insist on the imperative necessity of conforming one's conduct in this life to natural

law, it nevertheless sought, on the other hand, as we pointed out, to attenuate the many hardships imposed by this law. For it knew that the rationalised individual cannot be indefinitely sacrificed—that the development of reason must tend to render the individual more egotistical, less willing to forgo the satisfaction of personal interests — and that the growth of egotism, in its turn, cannot but imperil the existence of society. Hence did Christianity complete the notion of natural (social) law by the notion of the Moral Law; hence did it seek to effect a reconciliation between the individual and society by means of the notion of Duty. The duties of the individual towards society are at the same time duties towards the Moral Law, towards God; and the acts of the individual over which society has no control, are submitted directly to the authority of that Moral Law. But the force even of the Moral Law cannot reside exclusively in the fear it inspires, in the punishments with which it threatens offenders. The idea of Duty must therefore be completed by the idea of Reward. The submission of the individual to the Moral Law, and through the Moral Law to society, will thus be facilitated. *The strongest motive inspiring individual conduct, namely the hope of individual profit, will henceforth determine the individual to sacrifice himself to social ends, under the impression that he is thereby working out his own salvation.* Egotism is vanquished by egotism, immediate smaller profits are sacrificed to the hope of infinitely larger profits later on. It is not a matter for the sociologist to inquire whether the hoped-for larger profits are of an illusory nature or not; all that the sociologist is concerned with, and all that matters to society, is that the hope held out is sufficiently strong to induce the individual to sacrifice his interests in this life. Society has no interest whatsoever in individual welfare after death; society has only to deal with the individual as an instrument for furthering social welfare, for aiding society to

realise aims that are not only entirely distinct, but antagonistic, to individual aims.

Suffering is at once a divine law and a natural law; the sacrifice of egotism is commanded alike by God and by society: in all this does the teaching of Christ coincide with social necessities. The divine law as revealed by Jesus, and the natural (social) law, both pursue the same object, which is the suppression of egotism. Where the divine law completes the social law, where it rises beyond the latter, is in the incentive which the divine law holds out to the individual in order to induce him to accept more easily the sacrifice exacted from him. The social law, being entirely regardless of individual interests, offers no reward that shall counterbalance the duties imposed on the individual. The social law imposes these duties, and nothing further; it has no thought for the individual, it cares not for his sufferings, it considers him exclusively as a tool whereby social interests may be furthered. The divine law revealed by Christianity imposes even more difficult duties, for it imposes not only the duties towards society, but also duties towards God. But Christianity does not content itself with imposing these duties; it sets itself to aid and assist the individual to perform them. It does not content itself with exacting sacrifices, regardless of the sufferings and privations entailed by them; it exacts sacrifices, and heavy sacrifices, but it sets itself to console the suffering individual, and to hold out to him the soothing hope of a just reward for his sufferings. It does not consider the individual as a mere instrument of social welfare; but it also considers the individual *per se*, and gives to each individual life an Absolute value, a value that our finite measures cannot measure. True, in this world, the individual, inexorably subject to immutable natural laws that care not one iota for the individual, but that operate exclusively in view of social welfare—*in this world* has the individual no value *per se*; in

this world he is a mere tool, whereby higher ends may be attained; never has Christianity sought to awaken illusions in the individual on this point, never has it sought to provoke him to useless revolt against forces that dominate him completely, against laws that he cannot understand nor change. But over and above this finite world is the Moral world, the world of the Absolute and the Infinite. Whereas formerly the individual had no personal value—whereas he was formerly entirely absorbed in society; henceforth the individual has a value—henceforth the end of the individual, his *raison d'être*, is not limited by society, does not confound itself with the end and the *raison d'être* of society. Henceforth the end of the individual, his *raison d'être*, is transported to the world of the Absolute. The great natural law that demands the sacrifice of individual ends to social ends is thus respected and safeguarded; but it is henceforth completed by a supernatural law that gives to this sacrifice a personal value over and above its social value, a personal value that human understanding is unable to appreciate.

The rationalised individual, who will refuse to sacrifice himself for a society that cares nothing for him—for a society that imposes onerous duties without offering any compensation —will naturally be more ready to make the sacrifice required of him when he knows his life to possess a personal and permanent value, when he knows that the results of his action are not lost for him, when he knows that his sacrifice will in no wise lose its reward. The eminently social genius of Christianity manifests itself with singular force in this equilibrium between individual and social interests, thanks to which *the sacrifices of egotism so necessary for society are made to appear as benefiting likewise, if not primarily, the individual.* As it is impossible that any benefit accrue, in this world, to the individual, the reaping of such benefit is, with rare cleverness, adjourned by Christianity to the world to come—that is

to say to a world of which we can have no knowledge. Had Christianity endeavoured to give to individual life a value and a *raison d'être* in this world, the individual would very soon have discovered that any such attempt is based on a delusion. Try as he will, seek where he will—the individual will never find any value for his life in this world. In this world he is the sport of forces that dominate time; in this world he is absolutely subject to the iron law which, operating exclusively for the benefit of society, demands the ruthless and unconditional sacrifice of the individual—seeing that, according to natural law, the end of the individual confounds itself with the end of society, and that the individual possesses value solely as a social factor. If, therefore, the individual wishes to find a value for life, he must go outside this world; and here is precisely where Christianity adapts itself to individual interests. Christianity gives a value to individual life, because Christianity knows that this is the only means whereby the sacrifice of the rationalised individual to social ends can be obtained; for the consciousness of his personal value, and of the consequent value *to himself* of the sacrifice to be made, will alone induce the rationalised individual to make it. Being essentially an organ of social defence, an instrument of social integration, Christianity adapts itself to the needs of the individual, because only thereby can it fulfil its primordial social function of subordinating the individual to society.

We view Christianity, therefore, from a standpoint wholly different from that from which it is generally considered. We see in Christianity pre-eminently an organ of social defence, an instrument of social integration, and only secondarily a factor of individual evolution. True, Christianity ministers to individual needs, and ministers to them in an incomparably beautiful and efficacious manner. But it ministers to them in order thereby to better reduce the individual to subordination, in the interests of society. The individual ministry of

Christianity is a means to an end—and that end is of an essentially social nature. The rationalised individual will not consent to sacrifice immediate egotistical interests, unless this sacrifice is made to appear to him as ultimately benefiting himself—unless a reward be held out that seems to compensate for present abstention or present positive loss. Thus it is that the road of individual salvation which Christianity has traced out—the road of suffering and sacrifice—is likewise the road that leads, far beyond the individual, to the salvation of society.

## II

Humanitarianism, like equalitarianism of which it is a corollary, is a means whereby egotism may be satisfied; it is the result of the egotism of inferior beings, whose reason has attained a development out of all proportion to that of their physical and moral capacity. Such inferior beings are necessarily vanquished in the struggle for life, and their suppression imposes itself as an imperious necessity if the vitality of the species is to be maintained. Yet is it not to be wondered at, if the reason of these inferior beings refuses to admit the necessity of the latter's suppression. Reason, being essentially and fundamentally an individual product, cannot but defend the interests of the individual *per se*, regardless of his value or utility to society. Hence, as we have seen, the necessity of controlling reason, of setting a limit to rationalism, in the interests of society. Christianity, like every other religion, is an institution that exists primarily for the defence of society; it cannot, therefore, in any way favour movements that are based on egotism—that are, consequently, detrimental to social interests. It is thus impossible that Christianity can countenance humanitarianism, which is precisely such an egotistical movement fraught with imminent peril for society.

Is it not, in truth, a strange assumption betraying ex-

traordinary ignorance of the nature of Christianity, that the latter, which has been the main factor of the evolution of Western society during nineteen centuries, should be based on principles which, if put into application, could not but bring about the speedy and irremediable break-up of society?

Jesus, the so-called humanitarian, never ceased to insist on the necessity of suffering, on the desirableness of suffering—of that suffering which a weak and sickly humanitarianism would fain suppress if it could. Jesus, the so-called humanitarian, declared that it were better for him who betrayed the Son of Man that he had never been born, so terrible would be the vengeance of God upon him. Jesus, the so-called humanitarian, did not hesitate to cry out: "Woe unto the pharisees and scribes"—did not hesitate to drive with a whip from the temple those who profaned the latter, because *domus mea, domus orationis.* Jesus, the so-called humanitarian, did not hesitate to predict that those who neglected in this life the great duty of charity *ibunt in supplicium aeternum*—surely by no means a humanitarian prediction. Just as little humanitarianism do we find in the words: *Si quis venit ad me, et non odit patrem suum, et matrem, et uxorem, et filios, et fratres, et sorores, adhuc autem et animam suam, non potest meus esse discipulus.* Far from foreseeing an era of universal love and peace and fraternal effusions, Jesus warned his disciples: *Surget gens contra gentem, et regnum adversus regnum. Et terraemotus magni erunt per loca, et pestilentiae, et fames, terroresque de caelo, et signa magna erunt.* Jesus did not come to send peace, but a sword; he did not come to abolish suffering, but to preach it as humanity's highest ideal; he did not come to predict an era of humanitarianism and *dolce far niente*, but an era of strife and war and rumours of war.

It may be objected that the doctrine of fraternity admittedly preached by Jesus, is a doctrine of humanitarianism. But it is nothing of the sort; and those who seek to identify

the humanitarianism in favour in a degenerate society, with the lofty and noble ideal of fraternity as revealed by Jesus, degrade this pure ideal. Humanitarianism is the fad of a society that is advancing along the path that leads to decay and destruction—of a society that has lost all energy, that hates all effort and all suffering, because effort and suffering are intolerable for enfeebled and degenerate constitutions. A degenerate and enfeebled society hates suffering and strife, hates effort under any shape or form, because such a society distrusts life. It distrusts life because it has no ideal capable of conferring a value on life, capable of giving to struggle and suffering a meaning that shall justify them. Such a society is ripe for elimination, for it is disintegrated, it lacks cohesion, the egotism of its component individuals has gained the upper hand and undermined collective discipline. When a society has no further power of expansion, when the sight of suffering and effort are intolerable to it—then must it make room for other societies, whose vitality, whose power of expansion are intact. The struggle for existence requires energy, vigour, manliness, fearlessness, on the part of the combatants. When a society ceases to comply with these *desiderata* of natural law, then does the latter, sooner or later, operate the elimination of that society. For no society can suspend indefinitely the action of natural law.

We have seen, in the fourth chapter, that the doctrine of fraternity implies the notion of Duty, as well as the notion of the equality of all *with regard to the Moral or Absolute Law.* But the very fact of the idea of Duty being a corollary of the idea of fraternity, proves that the latter is incompatible with humanitarianism. For what does the idea of Duty imply? It implies the responsibility of the individual before the Moral and the Social Law alike. The individual must, in order to satisfy the requirements of the Moral Law, fulfil his duties towards society; over and above the material social sanction

for social duty, there remains the Moral sanction—for the Moral Law not only subordinates directly to itself that part of individual conduct that escapes social control, but also constitutes the supreme sanction of social laws. The Moral Law therefore enjoins on the individual the necessity of obeying social laws—*enjoins on him the sacred duty of fulfilling his duty to society.* But what is the essence of the individual's duty to society? *To conform his conduct in all respects to the interests of the collectivity.* Mark, now, that it is contrary to the interests of the collectivity that inferior and useless elements of the latter be preserved. Consequently it is not the duty of the individual to hinder an elimination of such elements that responds to social needs, and that is in harmony with natural law. His duty, on the contrary, is to further by all the means in his power the action of that law, which operates in the interests of society.

Fraternity has a sense and a value for society only if it signify the fraternity of those capable, by their work, of furthering social cohesion and assuring social progress. The protection and preservation of the weak and inferior means the sacrifice of the stronger and superior elements of society, seeing that space and food are limited. But if fraternity signifies the sacrifice of the superior to the inferior, what possible sense could such a doctrine possess? In this case, fraternity would be nothing but an instrument of social disintegration and annihilation. Once again we ask: Is it not a truly strange assumption, that the religion which has been the main factor at work in the building up of Western society, should be founded on a doctrine that spells social destruction instead of social construction?

One would think it obvious that the great doctrine of fraternity signifies the co-operation and mutual aid of all those who, in whatever situation, are capable of contributing to the welfare of society. When we thus read it, the doctrine

of fraternity appears not only entirely comprehensible, but self-evident. All are brothers, all must co-operate, all must aid and respect each other, because all contribute, each in the measure of his capacities, to the great collective work of humanity, biological and psychological, which we term social evolution. But these contributors to the vast collective task are not the brothers of those who are incapable of co-operating with them, of those who, far from facilitating the labour of the workers, far from furthering the cause of human progress, obstruct that labour and hinder the onward march of humanity. The sheep whom Jesus assembles at his right hand are separated from the goats gathered together at his left hand, and have no communion with them. In the same way, the useful members of society, those whose labour in the social vineyard brings forth fruit, cannot hold communion with those who work not, and who are nothing but an impediment to society, a burden on the latter. To such as these the words of Jesus apply: *Quia receperunt mercedem suam.* And their reward will, or ought to be, that which Jesus foretold to him who rejected the teaching of the Son of Man: *Mittetur foras sicut palmes, et arescet, et colligent eum et in ignem mittent, et ardet.* Jesus did not hesitate to foretell such a fate to those unworthy of him; and yet, in the name of Jesus, society is to be forbidden to execute in a similar manner those who are unworthy to exist as members of the collectivity! But let humanitarians, who seek to prevent society from eliminating the parasites who clog the wheels of social progress, remember the parable of the man who, invited to the wedding feast, came thither without a wedding garment. This man likewise received his reward—and was thrown out into the darkness, where there is much "gnashing of teeth." Let humanitarians remember that *multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi.* Many are born into the world, many are invited to the banquet of life; but those, and they are the greater number, who come without

a wedding garment—those who are unfit to share in that banquet—those will be dealt with as Jesus said: they will be thrown out into the darkness.

The words of St. Paul: *Quae enim seminaverit homo, haec et metet*, enunciate a profound truth, and trace for society the line of conduct which the latter must pursue with regard to its worthless and inferior elements. The seed which the latter sow must be reaped by them—they must reap the consequences of their worthlessness and of their inferiority. Even as Jesus tells us that our actions are never lost in the sight of God—so must they not be suffered to lose themselves in the finite sphere of society; if the individual be artificially protected against the consequences of his acts, against the consequences of his worthlessness, then is society doomed. Each must reap what he sows: if such be the command of the Moral Law, so is it also the command of the social law. There is no room here for misguided pity and false sentimentalism. The inferior individual must pay the penalty of his inferiority; having come to the banquet of life without a wedding garment, he must be cast out. *Peccatum generat mortem*, says the Apostle St. James; and even as sin engenders death, so does inferiority in this life beget elimination. The sower who sows tares instead of wheat must reap what he sows: such is the unvarying law of the natural world, as St. Paul well recognised. Even as he who is worthy receives the reward justly due to him, so must he who is worthless in no wise lose his reward; the reward of each must be proportionate to his merits; and, in accordance with this rule, the worthless individual will be condemned to elimination. For he is useless; not only is his presence in the nature of a positive burden on society, but he absorbs food and occupies space that should of right belong exclusively to the useful. Therefore must he go, therefore must he be exterminated—*quae enim seminaverit homo, haec et metet.*

But nowhere is the doctrine of Christianity, as regards humanitarianism, better illustrated than in the parable of the talents. We have already seen, in the fifth chapter, how wonderfully the lesson taught in this parable safeguards the dignity of labour of all categories, high or low—seeing that he who has received but two talents is accounted equal, before the Moral Law, with him who has received five talents, because each has produced a work equivalent to his capacities. We will now see how sharply, and with what admirable perspicacity, Jesus, in the same parable, puts us on our guard against a pernicious humanitarianism. He who has received but one talent is the inferior and worthless member of society; he has not done his share of work, he has not contributed towards the maintenance or increase of the human patrimony —he is consequently useless and without value. And Jesus does not stop to squander his pity on this parasite of society —mercilessly and unhesitatingly he condemns him. The little which he has shall be taken from him and given to the capable servant who, having received five talents, has caused these to bring forth fruit. Jesus does, therefore, exactly the contrary of what humanitarian faddists would do. Jesus eliminates the parasite, the useless member of society— he eliminates him without pity because he is useless, because he has contributed nothing towards the welfare of the community; and he eliminates him in favour of the more capable, superior element—he takes the useless talent from him who is incapable of utilising it, and gives it to him who is already rich, and who is able to make good use of the talent that lay idle in the hands of the other. Humanitarianism, on the other hand, would fain deprive the rich of his riches, the servant with five talents of some of his talents, in order to bestow them on the incapable servant who is unable to utilise even one talent. Instead of depriving this incapable servant of his one talent, in order to give it to others more

capable, humanitarianism seeks to console the former, it sheds tears over him, it raises the cry of injustice, it demands "equality" for good and bad, for useful and useless—instead of leaving the incapable servant to his fate, it seeks to preserve him from that deserved fate by artificial means. Instead of rewarding the useful and capable servant as Jesus rewarded him, humanitarianism never ceases to cavil at this capable servant's success, never ceases to belittle it, never ceases to endeavour to prevent the capable servant from reaping the benefit of his success. Whereas Jesus had admiration only for the capable servant, and nothing but scorn and contempt for the incapable—humanitarianism seeks to degrade the former and to exalt the latter, seeks to prevent the capable from reaping the just reward of his capacity, while pampering and whining over the incapable. How different from the vile sentimentalism of whining humanitarians, whose own mediocrity prompts them to hate superiority of any kind—how totally different from all the humanitarian trash published in our times, are the words of Jesus who, when it was pointed out that the capable servant had already ten talents, replied: *Dico autem vobis, quia omni habenti dabitur, et abundabit; ab eo autem qui non habet, et quod habet auferetur ab eo.*

In these words Jesus succinctly enunciates a doctrine which is in conformity with the interests of society. There is no humanitarianism in the words, none of that humanitarianism which sacrifices social interests to individual egotism. Unhesitatingly does Jesus command that *from him who has nothing shall be taken even that which he has.* Jesus wastes no pity on such as these; the space they occupy, the food they absorb, are to be given over to those who have already much space and much food, but whose work brings in abundant profit for society. The parasite who does nothing, who is incapable of working, is not to be allowed to continue to eke out a miserable existence—he is to be destroyed, for he is to

make room for others more capable. Assuredly have those who seek to render Jesus of Nazareth responsible for their own humanitarian aberrations—assuredly have they omitted to read the gospels. For most certainly is the Jesus we see in the gospels not a humanitarian Jesus. At every page we meet with stern and severe condemnations of error, under all the manifold forms in which such error can manifest itself. Never does Jesus endeavour to condone or to palliate error, never does he hesitate to predict pitiless chastisement for those who persist in their error, never does he allow misguided sentimental pity to blind him to the fatal consequences of error, alike for society and for the individual. The numerous restrictions of individual liberty edicted by Jesus—are these humanitarian? Or are they not, on the contrary, in the nature of an iron discipline imposed on the individual, regardless of individual suffering, in the higher interests of society?

The essence of Christianity, which consists in the subordination of the individual to society, is of an anti-humanitarian nature. Humanitarianism is a doctrine that takes account only of the individual—that seeks the best means whereby individual interests may be satisfied. Christianity never stops to consider individual interests, never pauses to take account of the individual as such. The end that Christianity assigns to the individual is always higher than the latter, and to this end the individual is invariably to be sacrificed; in order that this end may be realised, any amount of individual suffering is justified. How is it possible, under these circumstances, to pretend that Christianity is humanitarian? By its rejection of the doctrine of equality, Christianity *ipso facto* rejected the doctrine of humanitarianism. Those whose capacities are inferior must rest content with inferior remuneration *in this life*; and those whose capacity is *nil* must be pitilessly eliminated, like the man who came to the feast without a wedding garment, or like him who was

unable to make use of the solitary talent confided to him. Those who are a burden to society, who obstruct the latter's progress by taking up the space that should be occupied by others who are worthier, because more capable—those need not think that they can justify their existence by an appeal to the Gospel; the answer to their appeal is given by Jesus: *Mittetur foras sicut palmes, et arescet, et colligent eum et in ignem mittent, et ardet.* From him who has nothing, shall be taken even that which he has; that is to say, a life worthless morally, worthless commercially, and worthless to its possessor as it is worthless to society.

So little did Jesus foresee the advent of a humanitarian era in which success should no longer be proportioned to effort and capacity, that he expressly said to his disciples: *Semper pauperes habetis vobiscum,* meaning thereby that the existence of poor and rich in this finite world is a requirement of justice, a necessary consequence of the unequal distribution of capacity. And let us remember, as Herbert Spencer observed, that nowhere in the Gospels is the institution of slavery expressly condemned. If Jesus sought to bring consolation to those who, in this life, are weary and heavy-laden, he never sought to excite them to revolt against the conditions that prevail here below, he never sought to destroy social law—but, on the contrary, to consolidate the latter, by rendering the duty of the individual towards the social law part of his duty towards the Moral Law. And we must beware of confounding, as humanitarians do, the *useful albeit less gifted* workers, with the *useless* parasites. The man or woman of humble situation, whose capacity is inferior, but who, in his or her humble sphere, contributes in the measure of his or her powers to the great collective work of society—this man or woman, however humble, however restricted his or her capacity, however small in consequence the social value of his or her work, is none the less a useful citizen; and if the work of this citizen have

small social value, if the social remuneration of such work be therefore insignificant, we must recollect that the Moral Law judges not according to our standard, neither does it remunerate as society remunerates. The parable of the talents teaches us that he who, having but two talents, makes nevertheless good use of them, receives the reward due to his labour—that he, also, hears the "Well done", spoken to him, even as it was spoken to the servant with five talents. And the parable of the talents shows us clearly the difference between this humble worker, and the useless parasite who is radically incapable of making use of his one solitary talent. The humble worker, whose social remuneration has assuredly been but small, will nevertheless "enter into the joy of his Lord." From the parasite, on the other hand, shall be taken even the little that he has. The parable of the workers in the vineyard shows us that those labourers who are called at the eleventh hour, receive the same recompense as those who have worked throughout the heat of the day. The former receive their recompense, because, although their work is of slight social value, *it has nevertheless a value*, and has been executed carefully and willingly. But those who, standing idle around when the master of the vineyard goes out, do not respond to the master's invitation to come in and work—they shall be shut out from all participation in the eating of the fruits of the vineyard.

The whole doctrine of Jesus may be summed up in the words: He who does not work, shall not eat. And no doctrine can be more anti-humanitarian than this—no doctrine can be more thoroughly conform to the interests of society. Never did a greater enemy of social parasitism exist than Jesus. Wherever such parasitism presented itself, whether in the higher or in the lower spheres of society, mercilessly did he condemn it. Most certainly, therefore, would Jesus have been a resolute adversary of an economic and ethical system

that engenders parasitism at both ends of the social ladder, that tends consequently to produce a biological degeneracy which cannot but be the forerunner of the disintegration and disruption of society. But to suppose that Jesus was therefore a socialist—that is to say the partisan of a social system based on the systematic cultivation and organisation of parasitism—is as erroneous as to suppose that socialism is the only possible alternative to the *bourgeois* society of to-day, which is advancing to its doom for having neglected to observe those immutable laws on which social existence depends.

Pity! Such is the universal catchword of humanitarians at all times and in all places. And most certainly do we find pity in the message of Jesus—vast and inexhaustible stores of pity from which humanity will never cease to draw. But where it is necessary to raise a warning cry, is against the misuse of the word pity. It is indispensable to prevent this word being misused of—to prevent it becoming a simple catchword, whereby weak and worthless members of society may be prevented from reaping what they have sowed, whereby such as these may be artificially preserved from their natural fate. Jesus had no pity, no words of tenderness for those who persist in their error; they shall go *in supplicium aeternum*; they shall be cast out into the darkness like the man destitute of a wedding garment; they shall be gathered up like the wood of the vine and burned in the fire; they shall be ruthlessly deprived even of the little that they have; they shall be destroyed like those whom the king invited to the banquet and who did not come. In the same way society must have no pity for those whose very presence is a perpetual burden for their fellow-creatures, for those who, by their very presence, create misery for themselves and for their descendants, and prevent happiness in others. Pity!—it is a beautiful and a divine thing; but those who misuse it in order to justify perpetual violations of natural law to the detriment of

small social value, if the social remuneration of such work be therefore insignificant, we must recollect that the Moral Law judges not according to our standard, neither does it remunerate as society remunerates. The parable of the talents teaches us that he who, having but two talents, makes nevertheless good use of them, receives the reward due to his labour—that he, also, hears the "Well done", spoken to him, even as it was spoken to the servant with five talents. And the parable of the talents shows us clearly the difference between this humble worker, and the useless parasite who is radically incapable of making use of his one solitary talent. The humble worker, whose social remuneration has assuredly been but small, will nevertheless "enter into the joy of his Lord." From the parasite, on the other hand, shall be taken even the little that he has. The parable of the workers in the vineyard shows us that those labourers who are called at the eleventh hour, receive the same recompense as those who have worked throughout the heat of the day. The former receive their recompense, because, although their work is of slight social value, *it has nevertheless a value*, and has been executed carefully and willingly. But those who, standing idle around when the master of the vineyard goes out, do not respond to the master's invitation to come in and work—they shall be shut out from all participation in the eating of the fruits of the vineyard.

The whole doctrine of Jesus may be summed up in the words: He who does not work, shall not eat. And no doctrine can be more anti-humanitarian than this—no doctrine can be more thoroughly conform to the interests of society. Never did a greater enemy of social parasitism exist than Jesus. Wherever such parasitism presented itself, whether in the higher or in the lower spheres of society, mercilessly did he condemn it. Most certainly, therefore, would Jesus have been a resolute adversary of an economic and ethical system

that engenders parasitism at both ends of the social ladder, that tends consequently to produce a biological degeneracy which cannot but be the forerunner of the disintegration and disruption of society. But to suppose that Jesus was therefore a socialist—that is to say the partisan of a social system based on the systematic cultivation and organisation of parasitism—is as erroneous as to suppose that socialism is the only possible alternative to the *bourgeois* society of to-day, which is advancing to its doom for having neglected to observe those immutable laws on which social existence depends.

Pity! Such is the universal catchword of humanitarians at all times and in all places. And most certainly do we find pity in the message of Jesus—vast and inexhaustible stores of pity from which humanity will never cease to draw. But where it is necessary to raise a warning cry, is against the misuse of the word pity. It is indispensable to prevent this word being misused of—to prevent it becoming a simple catchword, whereby weak and worthless members of society may be prevented from reaping what they have sowed, whereby such as these may be artificially preserved from their natural fate. Jesus had no pity, no words of tenderness for those who persist in their error; they shall go *in supplicium aeternum*; they shall be cast out into the darkness like the man destitute of a wedding garment; they shall be gathered up like the wood of the vine and burned in the fire; they shall be ruthlessly deprived even of the little that they have; they shall be destroyed like those whom the king invited to the banquet and who did not come. In the same way society must have no pity for those whose very presence is a perpetual burden for their fellow-creatures, for those who, by their very presence, create misery for themselves and for their descendants, and prevent happiness in others. Pity!—it is a beautiful and a divine thing; but those who misuse it in order to justify perpetual violations of natural law to the detriment of

Jesus promised reward, these that he undertook to console. *Certa bonum certamen, apprehende vitam aeternam*—the Apostle to the Gentiles awaits eternal life, because he has fought the good fight. The great difference between Christianity and the pseudo-humanitarianism of a decadent society, is that the former teaches *that we are judged according to our actions.* Doctrine admirably adapted to social necessities, admirably conform to natural law! *Igitur ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.* In this finite world the working of natural law is such, that each reaps what he has sown; that the fit survive, and that the unfit are destroyed. And Jesus tells us that, in this respect, the Moral Law of the Absolute world is similar to the natural law of the finite world. The Moral Law will also judge us according to our actions; the higher justice of the Moral Law demands also that we reap what we sow. Herein lies, as we have already seen, the great difference between Christianity and what is known as humanitarianism: Christianity declares that we shall be known by the fruit we bring forth, that we shall be judged by our actions; whereas humanitarianism would fain preserve us from the consequences of our actions. In a society dominated by the influence of Christianity the individual knows that he must reap what he sows, that he must accept the consequences of his conduct; and he will shape his conduct accordingly, he will strive to sow only good seeds, so that he may reap a good harvest. Thus is individual conduct adapted by Christianity to social ends—thus is individual salvation made to depend on a line of conduct that conduces to social salvation.

## NOTE

No contradiction is to be seen between the statement that Christianity was careful to differentiate the Relative from the Absolute, the Social Law from the Moral Law—and the statement that the Moral Law and the social law alike judge the individual according to his actions. We have

said, in the fifth chapter, that the social evaluation of work differs from the moral evaluation of such work, seeing that the former is based exclusively on the objective value of work for society, whereas the latter takes the subjective element of the *will* into consideration. But when speaking of the reward offered by the Moral Law or God for work of inferior social value, we were speaking solely of work of *positive social utility.* All the humble and unobtrusive labour performed in the fields, in factories, in workshops, in the streets, in shops, in offices, and elsewhere, is inferior when measured by its social evaluation—but it is none the less work of positive social utility. The social evaluation of any category of labour is a complicated process, based as it is on many different factors, partly of an economic and partly of a biological nature. These factors do not enter into the moral evaluation of labour—the latter takes no account of the offer and demand for a given product of labour, of the density of population in a given branch, of the costs of production, etc., all of which factors are of influence in determining the social evaluation of labour. The humblest labourer, who performs, nevertheless, a work of positive social utility, is equal, before the Moral Law, to the mightiest potentate.

But the difference between even the humblest labour of positive social utility, and parasitism, *i.e.* incapacity to labour—is as vast as the difference between zero and one. *The Moral Law differs from the social law in its evaluation of labour, but not in its evaluation of parasitism.* This will be clear to any one who has followed what we said in the fifth chapter. We there expressly observed that, according to the teaching of Christianity, he who has received much must perform duties in proportion, and that he who has received little, must likewise perform duties in proportion. We observed that Christianity allows no one, under any pretext, to elude his responsibilities; that it does not permit him who has received but little to evade on this account the performance of his duties. All this is very explicitly taught in the parable of the talents. And he who has performed the duties assigned to him, according to his capacities, be those duties ever so humble, will in no wise lose his reward. He, on the contrary, who has neglected to perform his duties, will be treated without mercy. The punishment foretold by Jesus will be meted out alike to him who, capable of better things, remains during life inferior to himself—who defrauds therefore society of work which he is able to perform; and to him who is radically incapable *a priori* of doing any useful work, who is incapable *a priori* of having any existence other than that of a parasite. Such is the only sense that we can attribute to the plain words: *ab eo qui non habet, et quod habet auferetur ab eo.*

The right of society to deliver itself from the presence of worthless and noxious members is thus in no wise denied by Christianity. Christianity, as we have seen, does not waste its pity on such as these. True, the biological, economic, and moral uselessness of a man does not preclude the possibility of pardon on the part of God; Christianity is careful to deny to us not only the right, but the possibility, of foreseeing the judgment of the Higher Tribunal to which all must be deferred. Even those whom the Catholic Church considers as having died in a state of mortal sin, *i.e.* those who commit suicide, or who die in duel, are not condemned by the Church to perdition, seeing that we finite beings have no means of understanding the nature of judgments rendered by an Infinite Being. Here we come to the frontier separating the Moral Law from the social law, frontier that we are not in a position to cross. The Moral Law enjoins on us the duty of fulfilling the social task assigned to us; it condemns us if we do not fulfil that task, if we neglect our duty. That is all we know, and can know. That is all that the sociologist has to take account of, when judging of the social influence exerted by such a Moral Law. The rest concerns exclusively the theologian.

The doctrine and constant practice of the Catholic Church is in conformity with what we have said concerning the right of society to rid itself of the presence of undesirable and worthless elements. The Church has always claimed the right, from the earliest times down to the present day, of casting out by means of excommunication those elements whom it deems noxious. This right, claimed alike by the Western and the Eastern Church, is of the *esse* of a social organisation; and if this right has been abandoned by Protestantism, it is because Protestantism in its innumerable forms is not a social organisation, but an incoherent mass of loose atoms linked together by no adequate ties of solidarity. In the same way as the Catholic Church of West and East claims the right of eliminating useless and pernicious elements, so does society as a whole legitimately claim this right. Even as the Church has never been humanitarian in this respect—even as the Church has never allowed humanitarian considerations to interfere with the exercise of its right of elimination—so must society beware of humanitarianism when it is a question of ridding itself of the presence of inferior and worthless members. Had Jesus been a humanitarian in the perverted sense of the word, most assuredly would he not have authorised the Church founded by him to have recourse to the extreme measures of excommunication and elimination. If he authorised the Church to have recourse to such measures, it was because he knew that the elimination of undesirable elements is a vital necessity for any social organisation. The Church,

being essentially a social organisation, could not have survived, had it been bereft of these means of self-defence. The energy which the Church displayed formerly in rooting-out heresies that would have caused her fall, is an example that contemporary society would do well to follow as regards the biologically, morally, and economically worthless elements in its midst.

# CHAPTER VIII

## CHRISTIANITY AND RATIONALISM

### I

WESTERN civilisation being based on Christianity, and the history of that civilisation being so inextricably interwoven with the history of its religious beliefs and institutions, it is evident that the question of the future of Christianity is indissolubly bound up with the question of the future of Western society. The disappearance of so fundamental a factor of social evolution could not but entail the gravest consequences for the Western world—could not but herald the speedy and final break-up of our civilisation. In examining the question of the future of Christianity, we are thus *ipso facto* examining the question of the future of Western society, the fate of which depends on the fate of the religious system by which it was reconstructed and reorganised after the upheavals that marked the downfall of the Roman empire.

That Christianity is a fundamental factor of Western civilisation, a fundamental mainstay of the latter, we have endeavoured to show in this book. Often enough we hear the remark that, even if Christianity did once upon a time play a certain part in the shaping of social evolution, it has long ceased to do so; that it is destined in the future to be a mere source of individual hope and consolation. Such a remark betrays lamentable ignorance of the nature of religious

belief in general, and of the nature of Christianity in particular. There is no such thing as an individual religion, seeing that religion is primordially and essentially an instrument of *social* evolution; seeing that the *raison d'être* of religion consists in the subordination of the individual to a power higher than himself, in the interests of society. If we see in religion a mere factor of individual evolution, then does the persistence of religious beliefs, together with the irksome restrictions placed by such beliefs on individual liberty, appear totally incomprehensible. To suppose the individual having invented, for his own benefit, a system of beliefs which weigh upon his entire life, which curtail immensely his freedom of action, which exact numerous onerous duties from him—duties which, considered from an individual point of view, cannot but appear wholly unnecessary; to suppose this, appears contrary to all common sense. Those who consider religion from this unilateral, individualist point of view, consider exclusively certain ethical precepts of Christianity; they entirely ignore all other religious systems, even as they ignore the counterpart, in Christian doctrine, of the ethical precepts in question — a counterpart which it is, nevertheless, indispensable that we should know if we wish to interpret correctly such precepts. Those who see in religion exclusively an institution for satisfying individual wants and needs, take solely into consideration the rewards promised by Christianity for individual conduct, and the consolation offered by Christianity for individual suffering. And they neglect entirely the duties imposed before such rewards can be obtained, and the suffering imposed in order to render the individual worthy of consolation. These individualist philosophers, with strange shortsightedness, perceive only the Christian rewards and consolations; they do not perceive the Christian duties and sufferings. But the latter constitute the fundament of the former; reward and consolation come only secondarily into consideration, they are

offered only in order better to induce the individual to sacrifice his liberty to higher ends. And in no other religious system do we find such rewards and consolations offered in exchange for duties and suffering imposed — in all other religious systems we find the individual ruthlessly sacrificed without any compensation of any sort being offered, or, at the most, as in the case of the Hebrews, in exchange for very inadequate compensation.

If the individual, in the Christian system, is no longer a mere blind instrument for mechanically serving a supra-individual purpose—if Christian ethics, separating the domain of the Absolute from that of the Relative, assign to the individual a value *per se* in the Absolute world—he is none the less rigorously subordinated to a severe moral code, none the less restricted in his liberty at every turn. Those who see in Christianity an institution existing for the benefit of the individual, apparently forget the duties exacted by Christianity from the latter, the restrictions on his liberty, the sacrifices demanded of him. They forget that *si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum et tollat crucem suam.* Seeing only the rewards promised and the consolations held out, they overlook the fact that these rewards and consolations are conditioned by duty and self-sacrifice. Perceiving only one aspect of the Christian doctrine, they do not understand that the aim of Christianity is primarily to dominate and to subdue the individual; and only secondarily to reward and console him. They do not understand, as we have said, that reward and consolation are conditioned by duty and suffering —that they are in the nature of stimulants whereby the sacrifice of individual interests, individual pleasures, individual liberty, may more easily be obtained.

If the notion of duty, whereby egotism is refrained and an equilibrium between society and the individual secured—if this notion is to have the necessary efficacity in order that

the aforementioned ends may be realised, it is indispensable that the individual be so strongly integrated in society that he be willing to prefer duty, together with the sacrifice of individual interests implied by it, to the immediate satisfaction of personal desires. It is obviously not enough to preach to the individual the duty of sacrifice—it is essential that an ideal be held up to the individual, sufficiently attractive, sufficiently powerful, for him to be willing to sacrifice himself to such an ideal. The Christian ideal is, in this respect, as perfect an ideal as it is humanly possible to conceive of. The individual is asked to sacrifice himself to God, in exchange for the wondrous sacrifice whereby God voluntarily immolated himself in order to obtain for the individual the possibility of eternal life. Christianity thus appeals at once to the gratitude of the individual and to his sense of duty—or, rather, the sense of duty is developed by an appeal to gratitude. The gratitude of the individual for the wondrous and incomprehensible sacrifice of Calvary must find expression, it must manifest itself in the willingness of the individual to perform the duties assigned to him—duties which, although onerous when considered from the point of view of the individual, are in reality but a poor return for the immense sacrifice of the divine victim. The ideal which demands obedience, and to which the individual is required to sacrifice himself, is thus an ideal which can never be attained. However great be the sacrifices he consents to, however punctually he fulfils the duties exacted of him, the individual can never live up to his ideal, can never give adequate compensation for the sacrifice and sufferings of his God. Christianity thus guarantees the perpetuity of individual effort and of individual sacrifice; it ensures that never can the individual abandon his task, under the pretext of having fulfilled the latter; seeing that that task, as we have said, can never, under any circumstances, be entirely fulfilled.

The ideal of Christianity is thus adapted to social necessities, in that it is capable of obtaining the sacrifice of individual egotism, and in that it ensures that this sacrifice shall be permanent. The only way in which the individual can attain to moral perfection, and consequently to the salvation promised by Jesus Christ, is by continual and never-ending sacrifice. The sacrifice of Calvary demands a return; and the gratitude of the individual towards the God who so loved him as to willingly suffer death and ignominy in order to open unto him the gates of eternal life—the gratitude of the individual must be such, that the supreme object of his existence must be to endeavour, by all the means in his power, to render himself worthy of the divine love and sacrifice. Christianity thus appeals to the individual, appears to the latter as a message of individual hope and consolation, as a means of individual salvation. But this message to the individual is none the less a secondary aspect of Christianity, as we find when we come to analyse the latter more closely. Christianity is first and foremost an instrument of social integration, of social salvation; and the hope and consolation which it offers the individual, are but the means whereby the integration of the rationalised individual in society may be obtained. We have seen in the seventh chapter how the individual, in that he subordinates himself to the Christian ideal, *ipso facto* adapts himself to the needs of society. For Christianity requires observance of the social law, as part of the individual's duty towards the Moral Law—as part of that duty, which is but a means whereby the individual's gratitude towards God may be expressed. And in respect of that part of individual conduct which escapes social control, Christianity requires, likewise, the rigorous repression of egotism—and the repression of egotism is a *conditio sine qua non* of the individual's subordination to society and to social law; in all his actions, the individual is thus trained to follow a line of

conduct that ensures his integration in society. In the third place Christianity represses egotism by constantly imposing suffering and struggle on the individual — by constantly disciplining the individual in the only school in which he can be effectively disciplined. The primary aim of Christianity remains thus invariably the subordination of the individual to higher supra-individual ends. If it appeals to the individual, if it speaks soothingly to him, if it brings him a message of hope and consolation, this is due to the fact that the rationalised individual will not consent to sacrifice himself to higher ends —that is to say to ends exterior to his personality—unless he has reason to believe that the sacrifice of immediate interests will be compensated for by greater gains in the future.

As we have already seen in the seventh chapter, Christianity vanquishes egotism by an appeal to egotism. The individual is induced to sacrifice himself in this life, by the hope of reward in the life to come. He is induced to pursue in this life a line of conduct profitable to society; he is induced to accept the suffering and struggle which the working of immutable social laws entails, because it is precisely the path of suffering and struggle which leads to individual salvation. The eminently social genius of Christianity has enabled the latter to adapt the individual to society, by representing the conditions that conduce to social salvation as conditions necessary to individual salvation. The individual can repay his debt to God only by following a line of conduct that ensures the stability and integration of society. The duties towards God, towards the Moral Law, are precisely those which the individual must perform in the interest of the continuity of social existence—duties which are all of them resumed in the fundamental duty of sacrifice and suffering.

## II

It is customary, since the eighteenth century, to look down with contempt on Christianity as a thing of the past, as an exploded superstition, as a puerility which it is waste of time to discuss. And this is by no means only the case with the professional anticlericals of Latin countries; for if it were, we could certainly afford to treat the absurd lucubrations and vulgar insults of insignificant politicians and journalists with the contempt they merit. But the tendency to see in Christianity a superstition of the past is by no means confined to such as these: it is, on the contrary, very general among the *élite* of the world of thought. It is incontestable that the majority of men of science, if they are not actively hostile to Christianity, are none the less prone to despise it—to consider its influence in the past as prejudicial to the highest interests of civilisation, and its influence in the present as *nil*. Far from regarding Christianity as an essential lever of social evolution, as a fundamental factor of Western culture, they regard it as an enemy of progress, as the instrument *par excellence* of reaction and obscurantism, as an obstacle which it is indispensable to clear out of the way if humanity is ever to realise an era of justice and true fraternity. Under the influence of these ideas, common to the majority of the *élite* of the world of thought, the most "progressive" States tend to become even more and more hostile to Christian traditions and Christian ideals. The nation which has always been the torch-bearer of civilisation in Europe, that is to say France, has now officially severed all connection between the State and Christianity. And it is a generally accepted view that the example set by France will be followed by other nations; that the humanity of the future will be an *areligious* humanity. In other words, Christianity is nothing but an infantile disease, which

humanity has vanquished. At the best can we say that it is an infantile philosophy, which the world has outgrown. For even the deepest of nineteenth-century philosophers, Auguste Comte himself, who had so profound a comprehension of the necessities of society, who grasped so profoundly the inner significance of social evolution, whose unrivalled historical insight enabled him to render well-deserved justice to the sociological task accomplished by Catholicism—even Comte saw in Christianity a thing of the past. So convinced was Comte of the inevitable disappearance of Christianity in the near future, that he devoted his whole genius to the herculean work of elaborating a social philosophy capable of replacing it.

Comte, and the eminent thinkers who have followed his lead, such as Taine, Littré, Frederic Harrison, and others, cannot certainly incur the reproach of not being deep in history, or of not appreciating sufficiently the nature of social evolution, and the importance of the various developmental factors at work in the shaping of that evolution. It is to Comte, on the contrary, that sociological science owes its foundation—to Comte that we owe at once the enunciation of the static laws of the social structure, and the luminous historical synthesis without which no science of social life is possible. Comte was the first to grasp the nature of social evolution, the first to understand the laws by which the rise and progress of society are conditioned. This being the case, it was inevitable that he should appreciate the part played by Catholic Christianity in the formation of Western society. Most especially have we reason to be profoundly grateful to Comte for having inaugurated a reaction against the shallow philosophy of the eighteenth century, for having combated the individualism of the Revolution, for having insisted on the imperative necessity of subordinating the individual to a higher power in the interest of society, for having established the notion of law in social life, for having raised history to its

proper rank as a science of comparative sociology. To Comte belongs the honour of having been the first to show us, in the admirable historical synthesis that he sketched in the fifth volume of the *Cours de Philosophie positive*, the forces which are at work in the shaping of the evolution of Western civilisation. Far from us the wish to diminish the value of the work accomplished in this line by Bossuet and Saint-Simon; but it is in Comte's work that we have the first really scientific effort to interpret history from a sociological point of view.

Despite the depth of his thought, the keenness of his insight, the encyclopedic nature of his knowledge; despite his unique comprehension of sociological law and of the factors that are active in shaping social evolution; Comte nevertheless failed to render justice to the part played by Christianity in the social movement of the nineteenth century, and still more to render justice to the *capacities* of the Christian religion in the future.[1] If this be the case with Comte, far more must it be so with those who possess neither his philosophical insight, nor his amazing encyclopedic erudition, nor his comprehension of sociological law. It is not surprising, under these circumstances, if experts in other branches of science fail to appreciate the value of Christianity. As a matter of fact, the question of the future of Christianity is habitually posed in an entirely wrong manner. And if Comte, who examined the question and endeavoured to answer it from the standpoint of the trained sociologist, came to unsatisfactory conclusions,

[1] It is, of course, possible that Christianity plays scarcely any part in the social evolution of the twentieth century—even as it is possible that biology and the observance of biological law be ever more and more relegated to the background. But this proves absolutely nothing against the capacities of Christianity, any more than it proves anything against the value and necessity of observing biological laws. A society of which unrestricted rationalism has destroyed the cohesion and stability, can forsake the path that alone conduces to social salvation. Sooner or later, however, Nature will have her revenge. If French anticlerical politicians imagine that they have destroyed God, they will one day discover, to their cost, that they have not been able to destroy natural law.

much more must the conclusions of all those, mathematicians, astronomers, physicists, biologists, geologists, psychologists, who have no training whatever in sociology, but who decide so frequently and so dogmatically concerning the future of Christianity, appear unconvincing. It is a strange phenomenon, which we will merely note in passing, that whereas the sociologist would not consider himself justified in laying down the law in a branch of natural science in which he is not an expert, yet so many professors of mathematics or of natural science think themselves competent to solve problems of sociology, simply by reason of the fact that they are experts in their own domain.

The great majority of those who hasten to relegate Christianity to the museum of antiquities, consider religion in general and Christianity in particular from an exclusively individualist point of view. They consider solely the question as to whether Christianity has or has not benefited the individual. Viewing Christianity from the standpoint of the individual, it is not surprising that they see in Christianity a formidable obstacle to individual emancipation and to individual liberty, and that they do not understand the sociological necessity of the restrictions imposed. Rational thought can never justify the subordination of the individual to an exterior power, seeing that in the light of his own reason the individual cannot but appear the measure of all things. It is not in the individual reason that a justification of the repression of egotism can be found, for reason is the instrument of egotism *par excellence*. Hence, as we have seen, the necessity of a limitation of rationalism, considered as the organised form of individual thought, by an organised form of collective thought, *i.e.* religion. Only when we assign a limit to rationalism, can we rise beyond the individual; and only when we have risen beyond the individual, can we hope to interpret correctly those vast collective organisations, which,

everywhere developed, have as primary function the subordination of the individual to collective ends.

The inevitable result of a one-sided and unilateral development of rationalism is the setting-up of the individual as the measure of truth, and the consequent ignoring of collective rights and collective needs. Science, which is a product of rational thought, is of necessity individualistic; hence, as Comte well recognised, is it indispensable that our education and the development of our knowledge be subordinated to certain principles capable of preventing them from becoming forces of social disintegration. Nothing is more pernicious for the individual, in the long run, than a liberty that is not founded on principles susceptible of serving as an adequate restraint on such liberty; for unrestricted liberty means the eventual destruction of those social conditions without which the individual would cease to be. Of an essentially rational and analytical nature, science is in itself incapable of furnishing the principles whereby rationalism, and the analysis that derives from the latter, may be controlled. It is for this reason that we so often see men of science absolutely indifferent to the claims of society, for this reason that all individualist movements of modern times seek to justify themselves by an appeal to science. And doubtless does science justify such movements, seeing that science is based on individual reason, and that it is by its nature essentially analytical. The analytical mind loses sight of the higher unity and harmony of things, of the fundamental synthesis in which all phenomena are co-ordinated. Being concerned with the elements which it dissociates in order to be able to study better, and having no concern with the whole, analysis necessarily disposes the scientist to grasp exclusively the individual aspect of things. Hence, we repeat, is it indispensable that analysis should be completed by synthesis, that science should find its completion in philosophy, that the

analytical mind be controlled by principles capable of preventing the dissociating and disintegrating tendency inherent to it from pursuing a too unilateral development, which latter would be fraught with imminent danger for social stability.

It is the absence of all such principles underlying education at the present day, which is responsible for the growth of an excessive and one-sided individualism that menaces the foundations of society. Individual reason, not being subordinated to a salutary discipline whereby alone an intelligent use could be made of it, it is inevitable that we should assist at a formidable development of egotism. Rationalism being of an essentially individualist nature, has *ipso facto* an analytical character. The tendency to concentrate the mind exclusively on analysis, to produce what we may term an "atomic" state of mind, that is apt only to dissociate, and that is blind to all idea of underlying unity, tendency which was characteristic of the culture of the nineteenth century, as it is, unfortunately, to a large extent characteristic of contemporary culture; this tendency is the natural consequence of an unilateral development of rationalism, of the non-subordination of reason to a "limitative principle." For reason, being essentially an individual product, can perceive everywhere only the individual, the atom, the element. When we wish to rise beyond the individual to society, beyond the element to the synthesis of elements which we call the Whole, then must we also rise beyond the analytical reason of the individual to a higher principle, of a synthetic and social nature.

The nature of science being, as we said, an essentially analytical one, it is only natural that men of science should frequently be unable to take a synthetic view of things. Pre-eminence in one particular branch of knowledge by no means prevents him who is thus pre-eminent from having a a very restricted horizon, and consequently from taking a

very short-sighted view of phenomena. Being naturally disposed to analysis, the man of science is naturally prone to see only the individual, and to lose sight of the collectivity. Being used to work solely by aid of his reason, to interpret phenomena from an exclusively rational point of view, the man of science is naturally hostile to the idea of any limitation being placed on reason, is naturally hostile to the idea of a "limitative principle," such as that constituted by religion. The man of science is thus often led to ignore altogether the existence of forces superior to the individual. And, if this be the case with the analytical chemist or the biologist, so is it also the case with the sociologist, unless the latter possess the indispensable philosophical training which alone can enable its possessor to understand the real meaning of social evolution, to penetrate beneath the surface, and to seek, beneath the surface and beyond appearances, the fundamental causes that preside over the destinies of society.

The sociologist, who has studied the workings of the human mind throughout history, who has grasped the nature of the forces that shape the course of social evolution, who has analysed the causes underlying the phenomena of the rise and decay of societies—the sociologist who has done this will not consider so lightly the possibility of the disappearance of those collective beliefs which have constituted the main principle of Western civilisation since the downfall of the Roman Empire. For the sociologist who has been prepared by adequate training sees in religion, not an institution created for the benefit of the individual, but an institution evolved by society for social purposes. The disappearance of Christianity would signify the loss of those bulwarks erected by Western society for the defence of its vital interests, the levelling of the rampart that protects society against the individual. With Christianity would vanish the only efficient restraint on egotism, the only adequate guarantee of social integration.

Those who, being ignorant of the nature of social evolution, and devoid of the rudiments of a sociological training, consider Christianity as a mere individual phenomenon, as a mere obstacle to the emancipation of the individual; and who, in consequence, desire and predict the speedy downfall of that religion; these, of course, take no sort of consideration of the interests of society, which Christianity, in that it is primarily a social institution, has the task of defending.

But those who predict the disappearance of Christianity; who tell us that the twentieth century will see the final break-up of all the old faiths of Western humanity; who tell us that, at the most, Christianity can only hope to survive as a purely individual philosophy and as a purely individual consolation; these are not necessarily infallible prophets. And this infallibility may the more legitimately be doubted if we take account of the lessons of history, if we study throughout the history of humanity the workings of the same sociological laws. At the conclusion of such a study we may come to the conclusion that *the continuity of the Christian religion, continuity that is indispensable to society, is guaranteed by the fact of that religion possessing an essentially synthetic nature, in that it takes account alike of social and of individual necessities.* Did it take no account of the individual, did it exact the sacrifice of the individual to society, without giving anything in return to the former; then may we be certain that the progress of rationalism would long since have undermined and ruined it. The fact that it has survived the many and violent storms encountered on the way, such as the terrible storms of the Reformation and the Revolution; that it has vanquished the manifold heresies that sprang up like mushrooms on its path, Gnosticism and Monophysitism, Manichæanism and Nestorianism, Quietism and Jansenism, and all the other multifarious aberrations which history records; this fact constitutes surely an irrefragable proof of the wondrous adaptation of

Christianity to the needs alike of society and of the individual. As we have said, did Christianity take no account of the individual, assuredly would the development of rationalism long since have killed it; for the development of rationalism, and the growth of egotism which results from it, will always prevent the individual from sacrificing his immediate personal interests to higher ends, unless he has reason to believe that the sacrifice will be adequately compensated for later on. The peculiar genius of Christianity resides in the fact that, while rigorously subordinating the individual to a higher law, while strictly curtailing individual liberty, it nevertheless adapts itself far more to the permanent needs of the individual than does rationalism. It is in this synthetic nature of Christianity, in this unique capacity which it possesses for adapting itself to two series of antagonistic interests, that the guarantee of the stability of the Christian religion is to be found.

We have said, in the seventh chapter, that look where he will, the individual will find in life itself no principle capable of conferring an adequate value on life. In life itself no sanction can be found for the struggle and suffering that are the necessary accompaniments of existence. Only too soon does the individual discover the fugacity and vanity of all pleasure, only too soon does he who thinks he has satisfied all his desires, find that insatiability is one of the forms in which suffering manifests itself. And rationalism can neither arrest the struggle, nor confer on the latter a sanction that is anything like sufficient, in view of the sacrifices which it entails. Rationalism can, it is true, bring about a temporary cessation of the social conflict; it can engender artificial conditions, whereby a society is momentarily withdrawn from the sphere in which natural law operates. But the equilibrium thus realised between social and individual interests is a radically false one; and in verity it is no equilibrium, seeing

that the interests of society are wholly sacrificed to those of the individual. This artificial, unnatural state of things cannot therefore be durable. Sooner or later will the society in which egotism has gained the upper hand, be eliminated: inner decay cannot fail to set in, and exterior foes will achieve its ruin. The temporary cessation of social conflict brought about by rationalism is thus fraught with imminent danger for society, and is invariably but the prelude to society's destruction. And rationalism is entirely unable, under any circumstances, to put an end to the "fight within himself" of which Browning speaks—to those sorrows and tragedies which accompany the life of every mortal being, and for which a sanction cannot be sought in life itself. Rationalism develops the sense of individualism, it tends to make of the individual the centre of all things; and the individual, thus awakened to a consciousness of his value, of his importance, of his rights, cannot but perceive how little his much-vaunted rights, how little his entire life, are worth, when weighed in the balance with all the suffering which life entails. The inexorable laws of life take upon themselves to refute the claim of rationalism to be able to confer a value and a meaning on life. For judged of according to the sole light of reason, life, with its disappointments and disillusions, with its partings, and the fugacity of the rare joys it allows us, is but a meaningless tragedy. Reason can give no answer to the questions that assail us most in moments of poignant grief.

Rationalism is thus incapable of conferring a value on individual life that is anything like equivalent to the suffering which is the law of all existence. And it is likewise wholly incapable of securing that durable equilibrium between the interests of society and those of the individual, without which society must fall to pieces and be eliminated. Alike from an individual and from a social point of view, rationalism appears

thus as an insufficient and unsatisfactory principle. Reason being unable to confer a value on life, it is therefore beyond reason that we must seek a principle that renders life worth living, that contains in consequence a sufficient incentive to work, in that it gives an adequate sanction to effort. Reason being likewise incapable of securing that permanent harmony between social interests and individual interests, without which society cannot continue to exist—without which, consequently, individual life is *ipso facto* devoid of any value, seeing that the individual can live only in society; it ensues that alone a principle exterior to reason can secure the harmony in question. *Whether we consider the interests of the individual or those of society, it thus appears evident that rationalism must needs be not only limited, but completed, by supra-rational principles.*

And herein lies the incomparable value of Christianity, alike for society and for the individual. By reason of its synthetic nature Christianity adapts itself alike to social needs and to individual needs. It restrains egotism, whether in the class or in the individual, by means of the idea of Duty. It obtains the performance of the duties assigned to the individual, it obtains the sacrifice of the latter's interests, by means of the Ideal held up by it to the love and veneration of humanity —an Ideal sufficiently powerful to command unquestioning obedience, and sufficiently attractive to command boundless devotion. By the great Ideal that it holds up before him, and which is the supreme incentive to effort, Christianity secures the integration of the individual in society; and by this integration is secured, in turn, that equilibrium between individual interests and social interests without which the existence of society is imperilled. An equilibrium between these two series of antagonistic interests can only be secured if the rights of each party are safeguarded. Rationalism, as we have seen, having necessarily the individual as its basis, sacrifices entirely the rights of society. Christianity safe-

guards these essential rights, it exacts the rigorous subordination of individual desires to social needs, the sacrifice of the individual to social exigencies. Christianity promises nothing in this life to the individual—and most assuredly is it well-advised in so doing, seeing that it could not possibly give him anything. But over and above this life is the life to come, over and above the finite social law is the Absolute Moral Law; and that which the individual is compelled to sacrifice in this finite life in obedience to the inexorable exigencies of the social law, he will recuperate in the world to come, when he will receive his reward in accordance with the prescriptions of the Moral Law.

Christianity possesses precisely what rationalism lacks—namely a great ideal, an ideal which confers an adequate value of life, which contains an adequate principle of authority and an adequate sanction for suffering and effort. Rationalism is only capable of offering the most illusory of consolations to those who are condemned by the exigencies of social life to struggle and suffering: that is to say, a suspension of the natural conditions of life, suspension that must inevitably conduce to the disruption and elimination of society. And to those moral sufferings that are not a consequence of the social struggle for existence, but which have their source in the immutable laws of all life, rationalism is wholly unable to offer any consolation whatever. By developing, on the one hand, in the individual, the consciousness of personal value and personal rights—while, on the other hand, depriving life itself of its value and significance, in that it undermines religious faith: rationalism can but exasperate individual discontent, in that it creates a permanent contradiction between the individual, with his hypertrophied self-consciousness, and the realities of every-day existence. Rationalism, if it sacrifices the vital interests of society, does not for all that add one iota to the value of individual life;

on the contrary does it diminish and impoverish the latter, by depriving it of the only meaning which it can possess.

As we have said, Christianity offers the individual nothing in this life. It does not, therefore, like rationalism, flatter the individual with vain hopes, which are doomed in advance to be deceived. The individual is thus spared an unnecessary disillusion—an unnecessary suffering is not added to those which he must of necessity endure, and which are sufficiently numerous. Christianity does not excite the individual to revolt against natural law, but teaches him the duty of submission to the latter. Christianity does not seek to render the individual happy in this life, does not hold up before his eyes the mirage of an earthly paradise. On the contrary, Christianity recognises full well the necessity of suffering; and not only that, but it teaches us that suffering is desirable, that we must not merely accept it, but seek it. Alone the path of suffering leads to the goal of individual salvation; and he who has not manfully carried his cross, is not fit to wear the crown. The Christian ideal offers to the individual nothing in this life but suffering; and it thereby puts itself into entire harmony with natural law. But suffering has here a meaning, which it has not otherwise. Rationalism can give no meaning to suffering, and this is why rationalism must seek to suppress the latter, must seek to create artificial conditions under which natural laws shall be unable to operate. Christianity, on the other hand, is under no obligation to suppress the fundamental condition of all life, for suffering is not only admitted but glorified by it; and Christianity is able to admit suffering, to glorify suffering, because it is able to give to suffering a higher meaning. Suffering is accepted, suffering is justified, because life has a value. Not a value which can be measured by earthly measures, but a value infinitely greater than all earthly values. Our passage in the finite world, with all the struggles and sufferings entailed by

it, is a preparation—a preparation to the ulterior state of perfect bliss.

Thus does Christianity, by its genius, realise the complete adaptation of the individual to social life and to social necessities, whilst giving, on the other hand, a value to individual life. Truly a formidable problem to solve, and which could only be solved by an institution possessing the rarest social capacities. For the individual can exist only in society; and his existence as a social being is devoid of meaning, and consequently devoid of value. During his passage in this world, he is ruthlessly sacrificed to interests wholly foreign to his, and immeasurably higher than his; during this life he is condemned to labour and to suffer, without seeing any adequate profit accrue to him. He is condemned, either to see his ambitions disappointed and his hopes falsified, or else, if he attain his wished-for goal, to discover that insatiability is a law of life, and one of the cruellest of such laws. All this is fully accepted by Christianity, which supports and backs up natural law by making suffering appear as something desirable, by giving to suffering the character of a divine law. And yet, although it not only admits, but reinforces, natural law—the natural law whereby the individual is condemned to perpetual suffering and to perpetual sacrifice—Christianity nevertheless safeguards individual interests, in that it gives to each individual life its permanent value in the absolute world.

The solution brought by Christianity to the great problem aforementioned—the problem of how to enforce natural and social laws whilst at the same time safeguarding individual interests—is in truth the only possible satisfactory solution. The law of life condemns us to suffer; and in life itself we can find no explanation of this law, in life itself we can find no principle that confers a value on life. Therefore must rationalism, which refuses to seek for any principle outside

life, outside the domain of experience, condemn suffering as useless, because meaningless. But if we seek to suppress natural law, we *ipso facto* suppress ourselves; for our finite existence is conditioned by natural laws. Rationalism thus leading to social destruction, the only alternative for society, if it is to continue to exist, is to have recourse to supra-rational principles. For the rationalised individual will, unless rationalism be limited and completed at the same time by supra-rational ideals, prefer destruction to living. Nihilism is the only possible result of rationalism pushed to excess—nihilism that is a consequence of the contradiction perceived by the individual between his aspirations, and the reality in which he is compelled to live. The one-sided development of his personality, the hypertrophy of his self-consciousness, on the one hand; the disillusion and disappointment produced by the non-realisation of the hopes held out, by the bankruptcy of the promises made, on the other hand: these inevitable consequences of an excessive growth of rationalism cannot but lead the individual direct to nihilism, which is but the expression by the disabused individual, who has no superior principles to fall back on, of the consciousness of the non-value of all life at which he has arrived.

The needs of society and the needs of the individual can be satisfied, only if we seek outside this finite life for a principle capable of reconciling the two. The needs of society demand that the individual be sacrificed to social interests; and the rationalised individual will not consent to this sacrifice unless the latter come to possess a higher significance, unless its utility for the individual be duly manifested. The genius of Christianity has succeeded in making the individual suffering, the individual sacrifices, which are indispensable for the welfare of the collectivity, appear as indispensable for individual welfare. By making individual salvation depend on the acceptance of suffering, on the voluntary sacrifice of

egotistical interests, Christianity adapts the individual to society by bringing individual conduct into harmony with social requirements. The primordial function of Christianity is the defence of social interests; but the only means of causing the rationalised individual to consent to the sacrifices necessary to the survival of society, is to captivate him by a sufficiently powerful ideal, so that the sacrifices in question may appear indispensable to the realisation of that ideal. This is what Christianity does: it ministers to the needs of the individual, and thereby does it secure the fulfilment of the individual's duties toward society. *The conditions of all life are such, that the individual will always have to go outside life, to exceed the narrow limits of his individuality, in order to give any value to existence, to find any adequate sanction for effort.* This being so, the perennity of Christianity is guaranteed, *et portae inferi non praevalebunt adversus eam.* And thus we find that the survival of Christianity in a rational society is assured in the first place *by the Christian system of individual consolations and individual rewards—a system that is of quite secondary importance with regard alike to the nature of Christianity, which is primordially an organ of social defence, and to the part played by Christianity in the history of the world.*

## III

The survival of Christianity appears thus assured by the eminently synthetic nature of that religion. The conditions of life are such, that rationalised humanity will never be able to exist without having recourse to supra-rational ideals. Always will humanity seek outside life for the value of life, always will it seek outside life for consolation, always will it have its gaze riveted on the Infinite, in the measureless domain of which it will search for Hope amidst the tribula-

tions and disillusions of this world. Far from being able to exist as an *areligious* community fed on the meagre scraps of rationalism, rationalised society has infinitely greater need of the support, consolation, and hope afforded by those religious beliefs which are likewise ethical in their nature, than has a pre-rational society in which individuality is wholly undeveloped. In primitive societies, dominated by collective representations, the mentality of the individual is far too restricted for the individual to be able to appreciate the value or the non-value of life. Questions of this magnitude cannot occur to the simple pre-logical mind of the savage. Having no concern with the meaning of existence, wholly immerged in society, entirely dominated by the collective beliefs imposed on him *a priori* with irresistible force, the savage has no need of consolation, no need of a higher principle whereon to base his hope of compensation for the suffering endured in this world. Primitive man is not a philosopher; and his individual mentality being practically non-existent, he is quite incapable of any aspirations which surpass the limits of the collective beliefs that envelop his whole activity. Only in the measure that rationalism is developed, that the personality of the individual comes to differentiate itself, that the individual mentality renders itself independent of the collective mentality, that the individual begins to form concepts independently of collective representations, that his thought surpasses the limits assigned to it formerly by such representations; only in this measure does the individual become capable of putting to himself questions of an ethical import, such as the question of the value of life and of the meaning of suffering. As rationalism can give no satisfactory answer to these questions, the individual, as we have said, is face to face with two alternatives: nihilism, or the acceptance of a supra-rational (*i.e.* religious) solution. For the fundamental condition of all life is suffering; and suffering can be

abolished only if life itself be suppressed. If humanity does not have recourse to this extreme measure, then is it inevitable that the question of the meaning of suffering—which implies the wider question of the value of life in general—be put. And this question can only be answered, as we have said, if we go outside the limits of life, if we forsake the domain of scientific empiricism and cross the frontiers of supra-rational belief. In a word: rationalism is the force that impels humanity to have recourse to what we may call ethical religious belief; rationalism, by the fact of it obliging us unceasingly to put the question as to the meaning of suffering and the value of life, constitutes the *raison d'être* of those higher forms of religion which are at once of a collective and of an individual nature.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

THE foregoing study will, perhaps, have enabled the reader to understand more clearly the nature of the two great forces that perpetually stand opposed to each other in the process of social evolution, ever since the moment when, in the course of this evolution, individual reason was developed: the two forces of religion and rationalism. At first sight, it appears hard to understand why, in spite of all the apparent advantages offered by rationalism to the individual, the development of rationalism should nevertheless always and systematically be held in check—it appears hard to understand why the collective mind and the collective needs should always triumph over individual liberty. We are now, perhaps, in a better position to understand the apparent anomaly underlying human evolution. For we now see that if rationalism does indeed permit the satisfaction of immediate interests, and does therefore secure for the individual immediate profits; yet this satisfaction and these profits are of short duration, and lead consequently to ultimate disillusion and disappointment. The conditions of life are such that we are invariably placed before the alternative: either a short-lived pleasure or else no pleasure at all, *i.e.* negative or positive suffering.

Why life should be thus conditioned, we know not. We cannot explain the mystery; and we can only bow down in

submission before an inexorable law. But certain it is that this law of existence, which imposes itself on us in our daily experience, is such that it must conduct us to nihilism—unless it conducts us to religious belief. The individual soon discovers the truth of Shelley's words :—

> Our sincerest pleasure with some pain is fraught,
> Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

He soon discovers that joy is not of this world, that the only tangible reality of existence is suffering, whether in a negative or in a positive form. The metaphysics of Schopenhauer were not necessary to prove to us a palpable fact revealed by experience—a fact known long before Schopenhauer to the sages of India and China, as well as to the Greeks. Sakya-Mouni taught that the only means of fleeing from suffering is to take refuge in the Nirvana, after all desire, all wish to live, have been suppressed; and this is a doctrine that must needs be fatal to society, destructive as it is of all energy and of all effort. The Greeks, as Nietzsche well pointed out, created the splendid vision of the Olympic gods, this immortal ideal of transcendent force and beauty, in order to counteract the spectacle of this life's woes, in order to repose themselves and refresh themselves after gazing at the endless suffering and shortcomings of the world; but this idealism of the Greeks, as Nietzsche was careful to insist upon, is the idealism of a chosen race of aristocrats, able and willing to contemplate suffering without fear, able and willing to make such suffering serve in order to create beauty, having strength enough to find joy and to derive benefit from a vision that they knew to be a mere artifice, a mere creation of the imagination, but that they revered nevertheless because it was a vision of beauty, and because Beauty was for them the justification of life. For a race less strong, less olympic—in a word, less exceptional—than the Greeks, an artifice, however magnificent, of however transcendent art, does not suffice; it is indispens-

able that the object of its belief be a reality to it. And this is why art in itself cannot be substituted for religion, except in the case of a very few—although art be none the less an essential factor of religion. Art conceals reality, idealises reality, renders that which is prosaic poetical: but the great majority are not capable of finding in art durable satisfaction of their deepest aspirations, precisely because art is but a concealment, an idealisation of reality; and they demand, not a concealment of reality, but reality itself—they demand that the very tangible reality of life and suffering be compensated for by what is for them the not less tangible reality of a life hereafter, which shall be devoid of suffering. As Goethe expressed it:—

> Wer Kunst und Wissenschaft besitzt,
> Hat auch Religion;
> Wer alle beide nicht besitzt,
> Der habe Religion.

The only alternative for the individual being thus a short-lived, and consequently illusory, pleasure—or else suffering and sacrifice; it ensues, as we said, that the individual must choose between nihilism and belief in an ideal reality. The conditions of life are such, that religion is the only means of escape from self-annihilation. Hence can we understand what at first sight appears inexplicable: namely, that the rationalised individual should persist in clinging to Christian beliefs which represent reality otherwise than it is, and which impose on him many irksome restraints and much positive sacrifice. Christianity induces the individual to accept suffering and sacrifice in exchange for a compensation which far outweighs such suffering. Society and the individual alike find here a profit: society cannot exist unless the individual forgo his liberty and subordinate himself to social needs; and the individual prefers to self-annihilation the hope—which is equivalent, for the believer, to reality—of future happiness and future reward.

## I

The history of Western society since the end of the fourteenth century has been marked by two parallel series of movements. In the first series, we see society struggling to emancipate itself from the inexorable laws of nature, struggling to attain a goal that is outside nature; in the second, we see it retracing its steps, we see it seeking, not to suppress nature, but to interpret the latter, and to give a higher ethical meaning to those workings of natural law that most greatly affect individual welfare. Such, at any rate, is the case with all those societies whose fitness has not been undermined by biological causes—with all those who still possess the *Wille zur Macht*, and the energy and vigour necessary to the expansion of their power. We can, perhaps, now understand the meaning of those reactions that invariably set in against the excesses of rationalism. For if such excesses be directly and palpably antagonistic to the needs of society, the individual, in his turn, cannot find in rationalism any durable satisfaction of his aspirations and desires. Rationalism, being a product of the individual reason, has the individual as its basis and is limited by the individual. But the individual, as we know him in Western society, is an essentially social being; the whole of his psychological life is a social creation; and he is consequently not an end unto himself. All the manifold needs, aspirations, and emotions of his psychological life having been developed by social life, by forces that are outside the individual and superior to him; it follows that it is only in society that such needs, emotions, and aspirations can find satisfaction—that it is only by society that the psychological existence of the individual can be regulated. Obviously can society only fulfil its functions in this respect if it be strongly integrated. A society which is a prey to anarchy and incoherence, in which the notion of solidarity is obscured,

cannot exercise sufficient control over its component elements, cannot subject them to an adequate discipline. The individual is thus detached from society and forced to fall back on himself; he no longer finds the completion of himself, so to speak, in a disorganised society—the latter is incapable of setting an aim to, and of regulating, the activities of its members. An immediate incompatibility arises between the needs of the individual and the latter's power of satisfying such needs. And this condition of moral instability and anarchy is of necessity an exceedingly painful one.

The life of the individual can only be worth living if a satisfactory aim be set to his activities, if his subjective and emotional existence be regulated and disciplined in such a way, that his needs be always adapted to his capacity for satisfying them. Otherwise will the perpetual consciousness of unappeased wants, the perpetual sentiment of insatiability, render life intolerable. An essential condition of any sort of happiness is order and regularity. But order and regularity can prevail in the psychological life of the individual, only if society be strongly integrated. For this psychological life, having been created and developed by society, can be regulated solely by a social force; and all social force must be non-existent if society lack cohesion and integration.

The life of the individual is thus tolerable only if its activities be regulated and disciplined; such regulation, such discipline, can only be enforced in a strongly integrated society; and society, as we have seen, can be properly integrated only by religion. Therefore is the individual brought, in the long run, to recognise that rationalism is a deception, and that the sole value which his life can possess is conferred on it by religion. Hence can we understand the reactions that history shows us setting in after every great social convulsion. When society is torn asunder by a sudden catastrophe or a violent upheaval, the individual is like a ship

cut adrift from its anchor and tossed hither and thither, the sport of the wind and waves. Earnestly does he yearn for some port, where peace and security await him. After the convulsions produced by the so-called Reformation and by the Revolution, a reaction was not long in setting in; and such is the case after every storm—the flowing tide is checked and retreats, however high it may flow. And there where no adequate reaction sets in, where a society is perpetually the prey of revolutions and upheavals, the consequence must be ultimate elimination. Society being permanently disintegrated, life loses all its value; and the sources of energy and of effort are *ipso facto* dried up.

Religion, although it be primordially and essentially a social institution, consequently a factor antagonistic to individual interests—although the individual be a purely secondary consideration in any religious system; appears thus to us, none the less, in Western civilisation, as a necessity not only for society but also for the individual. And it is but natural that this should be the case when we consider the conditions of life. For the individual can live solely in society; his existence is thus dependent on his subordination to social needs and interests; and, this being so, the only possible happiness to which he can aspire must be obtainable exclusively by his acceptance of the discipline imposed on him by society. As society can impose such discipline only if it be strongly integrated; and as the integration of society can be realised only by religion; it follows that the value of individual life depends, *par ricochet*, on the efficacity of religious beliefs. It is in this double aspect presented by ethical religion, in its necessity alike for society and for the individual, that we may see the guarantee of the maintenance of religion in Western society, as long as the latter remains equal to its task. The disappearance of this indispensable lever of social evolution could have but one meaning: the setting in of a

process of rapid and irremediable degeneracy. Evidently, among the various forms of religion, that form will survive which is best adapted to the needs of Western civilisation; and the form in question is incontestably Christianity.

But Christianity is itself not a homogeneous mass; and, of its various branches, that one, again, will survive, which fulfils best the function assigned to religion in general: the securing of social integration. If the integration of society can be realised only by religion, and if, as we have seen, the value of individual life depends on such integration and consequently on the efficacity of religious beliefs; it is indispensable that the beliefs in question be of an essentially *social* nature. Mere individualist beliefs, mere "undogmatic" religion, are wholly unable to secure the integration of society—are *ipso facto* unable to give to individual life itself the stability that is derived from social discipline and cohesion. Being primordially and fundamentally a social factor, religion can become "individualist" only if it be perverted; a religion based on the quicksands of subjectivism is a religion standing on its head, so to speak. The pernicious doctrine which constitutes the foundation of Protestantism, and which is so greatly in favour to-day—namely, that the individual is the measure of all things, and consequently the centre of religious truth—is absolutely false. Religion can only be efficacious, can only fulfil its indispensable function of integrating the individual in society, of subordinating the individual to society, on condition that it exceed the narrow limits of the individual, that it dominate the latter, that it impose itself on him with irresistible force. If religion is to be efficacious, its commands must be withdrawn from the sphere of discussion. It follows that religion, if it is to be a social force in the true sense of the word, must be dogmatic —that its criterion of truth must be an objective one, exterior to the individual and superior to him. Only the dogma,

which is indiscutable, can impose itself with sufficient force, as a categorical imperative.

What is, in truth, a "subjective" religion, an "individualist" religion, if not a contradiction in its terms? How is a "religion" founded on the individual reason to impose itself on the latter, to command obedience? If it is not able to impose itself and command obedience, then is it not religion; for religion is an extra-individual and a supra-individual force. The fact is that Protestantism has been radically incapable of grasping the real significance and purport of religion, and of the part played by religion in social life. For this reason has Protestantism always been unable to secure the integration of society; far from acting as an integrating force, it has invariably tended to produce social disintegration, to engender social anarchy. And this is inevitable, seeing that Protestantism contains no principles susceptible of acting as an efficient restraint on the individual, of subordinating the latter to higher ends. When the criterion of truth is placed within the individual, when the individual is taught to accept as true that only which his "conscience" prompts him to consider as true—then are the gates opened wide to all the aberrations and excesses of individualism.

We have seen, it is true, that, if rationalism be conform to the immediate interests of the individual, it none the less fails to afford durable satisfaction to his aspirations and desires. This being so, it may be urged that the aberrations of an excessive rationalism cannot produce very great or permanent harm; seeing that, taught by experience, the individual soon retraces his steps, soon comes to recognise the necessity of imposing a check on himself. That "individualism" be not conform, in the long run, to individual interests, is profoundly true; but to suppose that the average individual possesses sufficient foresight and sufficient self-control to be

able to voluntarily forgo immediate pleasure for the sake of a future benefit, unless the latter be of an exceedingly remunerative nature, is to ignore strangely the workings of the human mind. How many individuals are checked, in their youth, from committing all sorts of physiological excesses, by fear of the ultimate consequences that they may reap in the shape of an infirm old age, or in the shape of a shortened life? How many restrain themselves in sexual intercourse from fear of syphilis? And we take here only the most palpable cases of lack of restraint from fear of ultimate consequences. When we see how numerous are those who, unmarried, have absolutely no thought for the future, no concern as to the effect of present excesses on their married life to come; or those who, married and having children, are unable to resist the attraction and influence of a passion that spells the moral ruin of their family; or those who, as regards money matters, are incapable of the slightest prevision or reflection—when we see all these, and their number is legion, we understand how powerless is reason to exert an inhibitory influence on the promptings of egotism and on the impulsions of instinct.

When the individual has attained to a mature age, he may regret—and probably will regret—the excesses of youth; when the imprudent spendthrift has got rid of all he possesses, he will likewise be grieved; when the married man or woman has sacrificed family obligations to passion, he or she may discover how unstable and ephemeral is human happiness, and more especially that happiness which we call Love—he or she may learn all too soon to know "love's sad satiety." Before committing their imprudent acts, every one of these could foresee the consequences: and yet this foresight is absolutely powerless to restrain them, absolutely incapable — as we expressed it—of exerting an inhibitory influence. The man who, having contracted syphilis in his youth, marries in the

usual happy-go-lucky style in which marriages are generally contracted nowadays, without a thought entering his mind as to the possible consequences, and who subsequently contaminates his wife and engenders a hopelessly degenerate family—this man certainly knows, at all events vaguely, that "syphilis is a terrible disease." Does this knowledge in any way interfere with his desire to get "settled down"—or with any other of the motives that may inspire him to get married? When we remember that, out of one hundred women in Paris who are syphilitic, no fewer than twenty are honourable married women, according to the researches of Professor Fournier; we may judge of the degree of influence exerted by reason and foresight even in a case in which, we might think, they would be more likely to make themselves felt. Too late, when his children are stillborn, or when they die within the first year, or when they survive as sickly and degenerate beings, does the criminally imprudent father regret his imprudence. But it is too late!

Reason is always, in the average individual, impotent to restrain egotism, impotent to check the passion of the moment. The average individual, although he certainly knows what the consequences will be, cares not one straw about the latter. And the natural price of imprudence is often, in individual life, paid too late for the individual to be able to derive any tangible profit from the lesson. Society, being less ephemeral than the individual, is more apt to profit by experience. Hence do we see later generations profiting by the experience of earlier ones; if, indeed, a process of degeneracy has not set in and undermined the vital energy of the race. When a society has not fallen a prey to such degeneracy, later generations can arrest further progress in the direction of the abyss; and we then see what is commonly known as a "reaction" setting in. Provided a society be not degenerate, the evil effects of rationalism and egotism are thus susceptible of "self-amelioration" or "self-adjustment," if we may thus express

ourselves. But none the less do the disintegration and disorganisation that result from such excesses of egotism and rationalism represent a formidable waste of social force, a formidable squandering of social energy; none the less do such disintegration and such disorganisation gravely impair social efficacity. And if this be the case even then, when anarchy is but a passing evil, that can be repaired by later generations; we must likewise recollect that often do such convulsions not only shatter momentarily the foundations of society, but that they frequently occasion such a weakening of society that the latter is unable ever to recover.

We thus come to two conclusions. Firstly, that reason is, in the average individual, powerless to inhibit acts of an egotistical nature, although the individual is able to foresee the ultimate consequences, for himself and for others, of such acts; when the consequences make themselves felt, it is often too late to repair the evil; and then does the individual discover that, having forsaken the path of duty, he has but "bitter herbs, and no bread with them." Secondly, that if society, on account of its longer life, is better able to profit by the lessons of experience than the individual—yet, nevertheless, the effects of egotism are never indifferent in social life; even if they can be remedied, they leave a trace; the disintegration of society resulting from egotism represents always a great loss of social force and of social energy. It follows that it is not sufficient to endeavour to remedy the evil produced by social disintegration; but that it is necessary *to prevent that disintegration taking place.* Similarly, it is not sufficient that the individual live to regret the consequences of imprudent and antisocial acts, that have procured him momentary pleasure and satisfaction at the expense of society; for society derives no profit from such sterile regrets. It is therefore essential *that the individual be disciplined in such a way that egotism be placed under adequate restraint*—that the perpetration of such

antisocial acts be prevented as far as possible. In return for the sacrifice of immediate interests which it demands, Christianity offers a reward far exceeding such sacrifice; it thus prevents the disillusion that is the ultimate consequence of all pleasure in this life, and holds out the hope of permanent happiness hereafter. *Qui bibit ex aqua hac, sitiet iterum; qui autem ex aqua biberit, quam ego dabo ei, non in aeternum sitiet.* In that it imposes discipline on the individual, and thereby prevents the disintegration of society which is a consequence of the lack of individual discipline; Christianity safeguards those social interests, to protect which is its primordial task. In that it maintains social integration, Christianity *ipso facto* gives stability to individual life—that stability without which life is intolerable. If it demands, in the interest of such integration, the sacrifice of individual interests in this life; it offers to the individual a reward far greater than the sacrifice. And thus does it respond, also, to the ultimate interests of the individual.

## II

If it is to discipline the individual and to check egotism, it is evident that Christianity must be a force superior to the individual, a force capable of imposing itself on the latter. Protestantism, being based on rationalism and on subjectivism, cannot consequently be such a force. For rationalism has no means of enforcing the fundamental notion of Duty; reason is incapable of exacting the sacrifice of the individual to social ends. And, as a matter of fact, Protestantism hastened to reduce Duty to its lowest possible *minimum*. This was inevitable, seeing that Protestantism constitutes, under a vague dogmatic pretext, a "protest of the individual" against social authority. It was evidently impossible that the populations which, in the sixteenth century,

followed the banner of Calvin and Luther, of Zwingli and Socinius—populations sunk in ignorance and semi-barbarism —should understand anything about transubstantiation or consubstantiation, about predestination or the doctrine of the Trinity. And even if they had done so, certain is it that no mere intellectual movement would have sufficed to produce the cataclysms of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. If abuses existed in the Church—and they certainly did exist; they could incontestably have been remedied without the violent schism inaugurated by Luther; and, in fact, all such abuses were effectively suppressed, not by Protestantism, but by the Counter-Reformation, by the zeal and energy of Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus, and by the laudable efforts of the Council of Trent. Protestantism brought no remedy to anything. Exclusively critical in its nature, it was powerless to construct. But its power of destruction has been great. Everywhere where it has passed, it has served as a ferment of social disorganisation and disruption.[1]

Protestantism, as we said, undertook to reduce Duty to its *minimum*. We have only to compare the disciplinary system of Catholicism with that of Protestantism, under any one of the innumerable forms in which the latter exists, in order to verify this statement. Nothing can be more astonishing than the remark occasionally heard, to the effect that Catholic discipline and morals are *easier* than are Protestant discipline

[1] When an adverse judgment is passed on Protestantism, the writer who passes it is invariably accused of partiality. When, on the other hand, a writer violently attacks Catholicism, he is held to be an impartial judge. Let him who is able to explain this psychological mystery do so if he can. As for us, we are totally indifferent to such criticism. But we repeat that we hold absolutely no brief for any form of religion; that we endeavour to judge religion from an entirely objective point of view; and that we are exclusively concerned with the sociological aspects of the various religious systems. It is not dogma as such that we criticise—the question neither concerns us, nor have we the slightest theological competence: we only seek to appreciate, with entire impartiality, the sociological consequences deriving from certain dogmas.

and morals. It can only be supposed that those who make this extraordinary statement have never had the ghost of a notion of what Catholic discipline is. If Protestantism suppressed the priesthood, together with all the powers invested in the latter, this suppression implied the abolition of a permanent and efficacious spiritual control over the individual—the removal of a power capable of constraining the individual to fulfil his duties. And this suppression of the priesthood, this abolition of all efficacious moral authority over the individual, was conform to the subjectivist-rationalistic basis on which Protestantism established itself; if the criterion of truth be placed within the individual, obviously is no room left for the existence of an authority superior to the individual. Conversely, the institution of the priesthood implies that the individual is subordinated to a criterion of truth exterior to himself.

Together with the suppression of all efficacious moral control over the individual, Protestantism undertook to reduce the latter's duties themselves to a *minimum*. Henceforth is the individual, liberated from all adequate supervision, no longer required to live up to a high or difficult standard—henceforth is his life rendered more "comfortable" for him. Luther, who was unable to observe himself the vow of chastity solemnly subscribed to, and who sanctioned bigamy in high places in order to serve political interests, was well able to appreciate the irksomeness of the regulations edicted by the Catholic Church concerning the sexual life of the individual. Henceforth no exterior and visible authority should be there to impose discipline; henceforth is the individual responsible "before his conscience" and "before God." And a very cursory knowledge of human psychology suffices, in order to teach us that only in very rare cases is the consciousness of such vague responsibility sufficient to prevent excesses, and to induce the individual to prefer duty to the satisfaction of

personal desires and interests. The doctrine of "justification by faith alone" is likewise only to be appreciated in the light of a concession to human weakness. When the responsibility of the individual is reduced to a mere vague notion of responsibility before a tribunal that can obviously have no immediate hold on him; and when the possibility is further given to the individual of escaping even the judgment of this remote tribunal, on the only condition that he die firmly convinced of the greatness and the mercy of God; then indeed is the discipline imposed on the individual likely to prove of a wholly illusory nature.

It was only conform to the nature of Protestantism that all the other duties imposed by Catholicism on the individual—and which are the logical consequences of the Catholic system—should be likewise abolished. Not only is the irksome necessity of auricular private confession suppressed, not only does the ecclesiastical tribunal—that is to say, the only efficacious spiritual control over the individual—cease to exist; but the other duties imposed by the Catholic Church, penance, fasting, pilgrimage, compulsory attendance at public worship, are also done away with. The sacramental character of marriage is suppressed, and the dissolution of the marriage tie is allowed. The vows exacted from the Catholic priest—the vow of chastity demanded of every priest, and the vows of obedience and poverty required of the members of the regular clergy—are of course suppressed; for nothing could be more incompatible with individual liberty. The prohibitions edicted by the Catholic Church concerning suicide and duelling are withdrawn. And as the notion itself of "mortal sin" is done away with; as the ecclesiastical penitentiary tribunal is suppressed; as the individual is no longer subjected to any supervision; as his conduct is a quite secondary matter by comparison with his "faith," which alone suffices to justify him; as he may go through all the religious ceremonies, such

as communion, marriage, etc., without having to fulfil any specified conditions—or, at all events, without having to prove that he has fulfilled any such conditions: so is the life of the Protestant an essentially free one. His obligations are so few in number, the sanction for conduct is so far removed, his responsibility is so vague, that religion exercises scarcely any authority over him at all. And this is inevitable, this is as it should be according to the fundamental principles of Protestantism, which latter is based on rationalism—consequently on individual liberty.

How profoundly different this individualistic, anarchical system of Protestantism is from the rigid discipline, powerful organisation, and remarkable integration of the Catholic Church, need not be insisted upon. And where Protestantism leads to, we know—it leads directly to self-destruction and to social disintegration. Founded as it is on the quicksands of subjectivism, Protestantism is wholly lacking in principles whereby individual liberty may be restricted, and whereby the individuals may be linked together in a coherent and disciplined organisation. The orgies of John of Leyden and Knipperdolling were but a logical outcome of Protestant doctrine; and most certainly would Anabaptism have ended in social annihilation, had it not been suppressed. Its suppression, the condemnation of its excesses by the other Protestant bodies, were due to the elementary instinct of self-preservation—but the suppression of Anabaptism was in itself an illogical and unjustifiable measure, when judged of according to the tenets of Protestantism. For if the individual be the measure of all truth; if the criterion of truth be within the individual; then has no exterior power the right to intervene, seeing that the "individual conscience" is the sole judge of right and wrong.

The disintegrating tendency inherent in Protestantism has manifested itself with sufficient force in the splitting up of the

"reformed religion" into some four hundred sects—each of which claims to be the true representative of Christianity. And doubtless is the claim of each one of these bodies justifiable in the light of Protestant doctrine—seeing that no supra-individual tribunal is present to decide the question. Each individual conscience being the depositary of truth and the sole measure of truth, each individual can logically claim to possess the "pure and unadulterated doctrine"—whether he belong to the Calvinist confession, which counts some thirty million believers, or to an obscure sect of a dozen persons and a wooden shanty. But Protestantism obviously does not stop here: the basis of truth being not the sect but the individual, each individual, however solitary he may be, is the criterion of truth, and the exclusive arbitrator of what is right or wrong. That such a doctrine must necessarily lead to the destruction of Protestantism itself is evident: we have only to glance at the state of Protestant theology in order to verify this statement. It is not necessary to go back to the Tübingen school, to Strauss and Baur, Reuss and Volkmar, in order to find this out. If we read the works of the most respected and eminent of contemporary theologians, of Pfleiderer and Harnack for instance, we shall soon perceive the extent to which Protestantism has "reduced" Christianity, in order to render the latter up to date. For these most distinguished of Protestant theologians, the so-called fundamental doctrines of traditional Christianity—the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Resurrection—are "poetical legends"; in other words, fables and myths. Christianity is nothing but an "interior music," to speak like Schleiermacher, nothing but the vague consciousness of the "penetration of nature by a divine principle." Jesus lived in intimate spiritual communion with God; he was one of the "selected vehicles" in which the divinity reveals itself; his consciousness of the presence of God at every moment of his life was so acute, that it

was able to develop the psychological illusion of the mystical union of the divine and human natures within him: such is the Christ of contemporary Protestant theology. And Protestantism has not remained content with suppressing the divinity of Jesus; it has not hesitated to suppress the idea of God altogether. In 1911, a Protestant minister at Cologne, Yatho by name, was summoned before the Superior Ecclesiastical Council (*Oberkirchenrat*) in Berlin, to answer a charge of heresy; and he was declared incapable of fulfilling any longer his ecclesiastical functions. It must be borne in mind that Yatho not only absolutely and categorically denied the divinity of Jesus, not only categorically rejected the New Testament *en bloc*, but that he not less categorically denied the existence of God. Very justly could the Monistic Union of Germany claim Yatho as one of theirs, seeing that the latter only admitted God as an "inner force, not conceived of as exterior to the individual, but as inherent to him"—in other words, reduced God to a mere synonym with the "individual conscience." All duality of God and Nature having been done away with, the ideas of creation, of providence, of prayer, of immortality, are *ipso facto* deprived of any *raison d'être*. The Protestant *Oberkirchenrat* not unnaturally came to the conclusion that a gentleman holding these views could not occupy a post as Christian minister—that he who denied the existence of God could not be expected to convince others of what he himself disbelieved; and that he who denied the possibility of a future life could not well fulfil one of the essential duties of the ministry—namely, the duty of speaking, by the side of the grave, words that remind those who are left behind of the hope of immortality.

Of all this, there would be no reason to speak, were it simply a case of a minister being dismissed by his superiors for heresy. But the dismissal of Yatho, however natural it may appear, called forth a storm of indignation, not only in lay

circles, but also among the "liberal" clergy. It is this widespread indignation caused by the dismissal of a minister who categorically denied every single one of the doctrines he is supposed to preach, that interests legitimately all those who follow the social movement in the various branches of the great European family. For it shows us to what extent Protestantism is undermined by the effects of its own doctrines. True to the doctrine of subjectivism, true to the principle hat the individual must only consider as true that which his "individual conscience" is pleased to accept as such, a large and increasing body of Protestant theologians and ministers are busy sapping the foundations not only of Christianity, but of Theism. We have only to read the numerous protests against Yatho's dismissal, the numerous addresses of sympathy with Yatho, sent in by Lutheran ministers all over the German empire, in order to understand to what lengths the doctrines of subjectivism and rationalism have led Protestantism. To such lengths, that even Protestants themselves have found it necessary to intervene! Being a State Church, the Prussian Lutherian confession could have recourse to the State for assistance in the matter. However incompatible it may be with Protestant principles, however untrue to Protestant tradition, however irreconcilable with the Protestant doctrines of integral liberty and subjectivism—the Prussian Lutheran Church has found it necessary, in the interests of self-protection, to erect, in the year of grace 1910, a tribunal of the Holy Office, in which a State-created Pope, rendered infallible by State decrees, judges—without the possibility of appeal—Protestant ministers for heresy. But as to the efficacity of this tardy intervention on behalf of the interests of orthodoxy, that is another question.

If Protestantism, on the one hand, entirely fails to secure the integration of the individual in society, to impose discipline on him, to enforce the notion of Duty; it likewise fails, on the

other hand, to afford adequate satisfaction to the deeper aspirations of the soul, to the yearning after consolation and hope in the hours of distress. It thus fails at once to satisfy the requirements of society, and those of the individual. In the same way that it reduces the notion of duty and obligation to a *minimum*, so also does Protestantism reduce mysticism to a *minimum*. Being a religion founded on reason, it seeks to suppress as much as possible all mysticism, all religious effusions, all those manifestations of piety that are not deemed absolutely indispensable. An exceedingly intellectual German lady, Freifrau von Heyking, in her most interesting book, *Briefe die ihn nicht erreichten*, has remarked that Protestantism allows only the worship of the Deity at fixed hours; one goes to church at a certain hour, strictly determined, just like one goes to consult one's solicitor. If one is unable to attend the consultation at this fixed hour, the solicitor is not at home—in other words, the church is shut. The God of Protestantism has his fixed hours, during which it is permitted to worship him in a prescribed manner—just like the physician has his consulting hours. And any one who has sojourned in the Protestant districts of Sweden, or Finland, or North Germany, or Scotland, can easily verify the truth of Frau von Heyking's assertion. During the entire week the churches remain shut, the doors securely barred; and they open on Sundays for the prescribed service, at the prescribed hour. Protestants are not supposed to have any religious wants during the week; if they have, it is considered improper, and they must restrain them.

In entire conformity with the rational nature of Protestantism is also the strict limitation of worship, not only from the quantitative, but likewise from the qualitative point of view—if we may so express ourselves. Not only do the churches open only at the prescribed hours on Sunday, but, when they do open, worship is reduced to its lowest possible expression—the religious manifestations are qualitatively limited to a

*minimum.* Art is studiously banished from the Protestant *Gotteshaus*—for art acts too powerfully on the individual, weakens his reasoning faculties, and develops mystical tendencies within him; and, beyond everything, Protestantism abhors mysticism. That which appears the most beautiful, the most moving, the most elevating, the most consoling in the Catholic Church, whether in the West or in the East—the Sacrifice of the Mass and the invocation of the Virgin Mary—is in Protestantism non-existent. The coldest and most monotonous of services, absolutely devoid of art, of ritual, or any sort of warmth or enthusiasm—a dry homily, a few icy prayers, some terribly unesthetic hymns sung in a yet more appallingly unesthetic manner; and all this in a building the mere aspect of which is sufficient to stifle any enthusiasm, however slight—to drench with cold water any flickering flame of mystical desire: this is all that Protestantism offers. A meagre pittance, in truth! And how can we wonder if the individual, finding in his religion no satisfaction of his innermost wants and aspirations—finding no reply to queries that have their source in the outpourings of the soul—finding only stones there where he expects bread; if the individual, disappointed and disillusioned, abandons what is henceforth to him a mere formality without meaning?

These things are not indifferent for the sociologist—not indifferent for him who, comprehending the importance of the religious factor in social evolution, seeks to judge of the influence which this factor is capable of exerting on Western society in the twentieth century. The fact that Protestantism responds neither to social nor to individual needs must exclude this form of Christianity from playing any part in the future development of Western society. The elimination of Protestantism, which has never been anything but a force of social disintegration, does not in any way modify the situation that has prevailed hitherto, except in so far that it renders it

clearer; and it will, perhaps, bring home to those who willingly take refuge in illusions, the impossibility of a religion, or of any other social force, being founded on the unstable and insecure basis of rationalism—whereby such a collective force is *ipso facto* perverted and rendered incapable of fulfilling those functions which constitute its *raison d'être*. The total bankruptcy of Protestantism, considered as a social force, may even have a beneficial result, in that it compels those societies who have had recourse to Protestantism, to seek another and more efficacious means by which the conditions of order, cohesion, and stability, that are essential to survival, may be maintained.

There are undoubtedly circumstances in which patriotism may constitute a social force capable of imposing adequate discipline on a nation, and of securing adequate integration. Especially is this the case when disaster befalls society, as, for instance, it befell Prussia in 1806. When society is thus visited by sudden and overwhelming disaster, adversity tends to discipline it, to secure the sacrifice of individual interests to the wider interests of the whole; unless, indeed, the society in question be undermined by biological degeneracy, in which case a great disaster will either sweep it out of existence, or at all events mark the beginning of its end. But it is evidently unsatisfactory to wait until a disaster has befallen society and shaken the latter's foundations—for it is an old adage, that prevention is better than cure. There are, however, other circumstances in which patriotism may suffice to repress egotism and to secure social discipline. When a nation is surrounded by foes, when survival is conditioned by unceasing vigilance, then, also, can the instinct of self-preservation manifest itself with sufficient force to be able to obtain the rigorous subordination of the individual to collective ends—provided, as usual, that the nation in question has not fallen a victim to degeneracy. Or it is, again, possible that a nation

be sufficiently dominated by collective political ideals, for its integration to be secured by the latter. The latter case is certainly rare; for we nowadays seldom find a nation in which anything resembling unanimity prevails regarding political ideals. The latter, on the contrary, act almost invariably as a disintegrating force, rather than as an integrating one.

Of all European nations, Germany constitutes, perhaps, the best example of a society surrounded by foes, and the survival of which is conditioned by unceasing vigilance. Sandwiched in as she is between France and Russia, with Great Britain menacing her ports and commerce and fleet—unable to depend on one of her allies, for the hostility of Italian public opinion towards Germany is well known; the power of Germany, her *Weltstellung* and *Machtstellung*, depend on the vigilance, patriotism, and spirit of sacrifice of German citizens. That the latter have achieved very remarkable things in this respect, the history of the various states that now form the German empire, since the commencement of the nineteenth century, clearly proves. And yet who can say that, at the present time, German society is sufficiently disciplined—that the individual interests are there sufficiently subordinated to the national interests? And when we speak of discipline, we do not, we need scarcely say, mean that outward and visible discipline known as corporalism and bureaucratism; for of this Germany has more than enough. What we mean by discipline, is the rigorous subordination of individual ends to collective ends—the unity of a nation in the realisation of a great common ideal. And this subordination of the individual to society, this essential unity of the nation, we do not find them in Germany at the present time. We find, on the contrary, unending conflict, unending strife of all against all—political strife, economic strife, religious strife. We find the *bourgeois* classes pitted against the social democracy, and, within the limits of the *bourgeoisie*, the agricultural population pitted

against the industrial and commercial population—we find Protestants battling with Catholics, orthodoxy wrangling with free-thought. We find, in Prussia, the governing class sunk in self-satisfied lethargy—we see here a governing class unable to perceive anything beyond the narrowest interests of class egotism, a governing class wholly indifferent to wider national interests provided the pockets of its members be filled. What matters it, for example, to the Agrarians who rule Prussia, if meat and every other article of subsistence has increased sevenfold in price within the last ten years, in consequence of Protectionism on the one hand, and cattle disease inside the country on the other—what matters it to these patriotic landlords if, as a result of the enormous increase in the price of food, the working-classes must be underfed and therefore incapable of producing as much as they could otherwise produce? When we see the rampant egotism of the governing classes in Prussia — egotism pushed to an extent such, that even the Conservative *Berliner Post* has drawn attention to its dangers; and when we see, likewise, the bitter strife and the total want of unity in the inner life of the nation — when we see this, we understand that not even the strongest pressure brought to bear on a nation from outside, not even the strongest pressure exerted by the possibility of exterior attack, is always sufficient to curb egotism, and to obtain the sacrifice of particular interests to collective interests. Over and above this "exterior integrating principle," if we may so express ourselves, it is necessary to have recourse to an "interior integrating principle," in the shape of an ideal sufficiently powerful to impose obedience and sufficiently attractive to obtain willing adhesion—capable, in a word, of securing the firm integration of the individual in society.

Discipline and social integration are not less necessary in a country in which astonishing material progress has not prevented a moral regression, a slackening of the bonds of

social cohesion, a relaxation of the sentiment of social duty, that are pregnant with danger for the future—we mean the United States. The materialism that dominates public and private life in the States, the too exclusive worship of the almighty dollar, have had as inevitable consequence the growth of an individualism that obscures the fundamental notion of social duty. The disintegration of family life, which manifests itself in the frivolous conception of marriage so widely prevalent, in the alarming increase in the number of divorces, in the arrest of the growth of population—a phenomenon that is already causing anxiety to American economists and philosophers; this disintegration of family life is a most unhealthy and dangerous symptom. As we have already observed in the fifth chapter, unless the individual learn the notions of duty and responsibility in the family, he will never learn them at all. If the family structure be disorganised, this is but the prelude to the disorganisation and disintegration of the whole society. No great nation can exist without the integration that can alone be secured by a great ideal. Idealism is precisely what fails in the States—an idealism that carries the individual beyond himself, and sets to his activity an end that is not of an egotistical nature, but that demands the sacrifice of individual interests as the condition of its realisation. In the States more, perhaps, than elsewhere, is the presence of a supra-rational ideal essential to the maintenance of social integration. In a homogeneous nation, with great traditions stretching back throughout the centuries to a dim and distant past, and which is placed in an environment such, that unceasing vigilance and undiminished fitness are vital and indispensable conditions of survival in the struggle for existence with surrounding foes; patriotism may suffice as a link of unity and solidarity, as an instrument for curbing indiscipline and revolt. But the population of the States is formed by a conglomeration of heterogeneous

elements, the majority of which have come out in the hope of gaining money. The States lack completely all great historical traditions, and the chief tie which binds the majority of its citizens to the land over which float the Stars and Stripes, is an essentially egotistical one—namely, the hope of individual profit. Add to this the fact that no strong pressure from outside acts as a centripetal force, binding the citizens together in the fear of a common and imminent peril. The country not being menaced by the neighbourhood of any dangerous foes, patriotism is not kept perpetually on the *qui vive*—the sentiment of patriotism is consequently not a living force in the sense in which it is, for instance, in the German empire.

We do not, of course, imply that Americans are not as patriotic as any Europeans; what we mean is that patriotism in the States, as a natural consequence of the political situation of the Union, is not kept at a white-heat condition—that patriotism is here rather latent than active. This is inevitable in a country placed in so peculiar a situation, in a situation so totally different to that of a European nation. As the Monroe doctrine, properly understood and wisely applied, effectively prevents the States from being mixed up in any European complications; as the prospect of a war with Japan is still too far distant—though such a war is perhaps nearer than one thinks, as the modifications in the renewed treaty of alliance between Great Britain and Japan appear to show—to be able to pour oil on the flame of patriotism; therefore does this flame burn languidly, like unto a semi-extinguished gas flame. Under these circumstances, we see at once the immense importance, for the States, of a strong idealistic force other than patriotism, and which is capable of securing the integration and cohesion of the great American nation. Too rapid material progress is not always good for society; and it is a positive source of danger, unless it be accompanied by a corresponding strengthening of moral

discipline. Such, unfortunately, has not been the case with the States. The unparalleled material expansion of the young republic has produced a relaxation of public morals and a diminution of the sense of social duty, to an extent such that the political, economic, and family life of the nation is in a condition of notorious anarchy and deplorable corruption. Especially serious, as we have said, are such phenomena in a nation which is lacking alike in historical tradition and in homogeneity of composition. Imperatively necessary is it that a strong social force be developed in order to combat the anarchy resulting from a deficiency of idealism—and this force must needs be of an idealistic, that is to say, of a supra-rational and religious, nature. Such a social force alone can secure, for American society, the integration which the latter stands badly in need of; such a social force alone can impose with sufficient power the social discipline lacking in the States, alone can bring home with sufficient authority to Americans the great notions of social duty and social responsibility. The disease that manifests itself only too clearly in the corruption of the political life of the States, in the economic anarchy, in the disorganisation of family life, in the general prevalence of materialism and mammonolatry—this disease needs radical cure. Protestantism has been unable to prevent the development and disquieting spread of the social disease we have noticed, and which threatens to undermine the fabric of American society, unless it be arrested in time. As a social force, in the States as elsewhere, Protestantism stands condemned. Based on the quicksands of subjectivism, lacking in authority and in discipline, reduced to a mere rationalist formula for obtaining individual satisfaction—how is Protestantism to undertake so formidable a task as that of *socialising* a great nation? Being an essentially individualist philosophy, and appealing to no higher principle than individual reason, how is Protestantism to bring home to the individual the

notion of Duty, which can only be justified by an appeal precisely to supra-individual, supra-rational principles ?

## III.

There can be no doubt that Catholicism is vastly, nay, immeasurably, superior to Protestantism, when we consider these religions from a sociological point of view. Any weakening of the influence of Catholicism in countries long submitted to the salutary influence of Catholic discipline and morals is invariably accompanied by a grave weakening of social authority and cohesion. This is clearly exemplified in the case of France, where the decay of Catholicism is one of the causes—though not the unique cause—of a serious relaxation of public morals, of a dangerous growth of egotism, of a dangerous weakening of the sentiment of social solidarity. During ten centuries, Catholicism was intimately associated with the expansion of French power, with the development of French civilisation ; and it is, therefore, only natural that the decay of France, since the eighteenth century, should have the decay of Catholicism as its accompaniment.

Protestantism is an exclusively critical doctrine ; consequently is it powerless to create and to organise. This exclusively critical nature of Protestantism, as Auguste Comte very justly observed, is well manifested in the name itself, given by general consent to the heterogeneous collection of doctrines assembled together under this common designation. It is a doctrine of " protest," of criticism and dissolution. It lacks entirely the organic foundation of a system of coherent principles, exterior to the individual, superior to the fluctuations of opinion, accepted *quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod omnibus*, and which impose themselves on the individual with irresistible force.

Catholicism, on the other hand, is not only great by reason

of its organisation, of the discipline it is able to impose on the individual in the interests of society; it is great also by reason of the principles that preside over the entire social system of the Catholic Church. The two main principles underlying this system are: firstly, a combination, unique in its ingenuity, of the democratic with the aristocratic; secondly, the complete separation of the moral and the political. The principle of Catholic government is an aristocratic one, in that that government is strictly hierarchical in its nature; but this aristocratism is tempered by a large mingling of democracy, in that all heredity is suppressed, and in that the hierarchy is recruited, even in its highest stages, from amongst all classes, and solely with a view to the fitness of the candidate. The moral is separated from the political in that the former is placed on an objective, supra-individual basis, wholly removed from the sphere of political combinations and fluctuations.

Those who criticise the institution of ecclesiastical celibacy, which latter was first imposed, as a general rule in the Western Church, by Hildebrand, in 1074, do not understand the motives that inspired the interdiction of marriage on the part of the clergy. When we consider the uninterrupted efforts made by the German emperors during the Middle Ages in order to reduce the papacy to a mere vassalage of the Holy Roman empire; when we bear in mind that the constant object of a policy systematically pursued by the emperors during centuries was the obtaining for themselves of the right to nominate the Pope; we shall see that the obligation of celibacy imposed by Hildebrand was a means whereby all durable *mainmise* of the secular power on the Church might be frustrated. Let us suppose that the marriage of the clergy was allowed; and let us further suppose that the emperors succeeded in their efforts to obtain for themselves the right to nominate the Pope; and we can at once perceive the conse-

quences: a dynasty would have been established in the Chair of St. Peter, a dynasty in which the succession would naturally have gone from father to son—and a dynasty which would have been allied, alike by the ties of blood and by the ties of political sympathy, with the imperial dynasty. That this would have ruined the Church both morally and materially is evident. And the great Hildebrand, who brought the investiture controversy to a close by imposing on Henry IV. the pilgrimage to Canossa, was far-sighted enough not to remain content with this triumph, but to take steps so as to render beforehand all future attempts to enslave the papacy fruitless. For if all possibility of heredity be suppressed, then must all hope of founding a papal dynasty necessarily vanish. The interdiction of marriage by Hildebrand must be considered as one of a series of measures taken by Nicholas II., Alexander III., the Council of Lyon, and Clement V., with the object of securing the independence of the Church and the Holy See, and of maintaining thereby the separation of the moral and political powers.[1]

Of very vital importance to Europe was it that this essential separation of the moral and political powers be maintained. For, if they be not thus separated, if the moral

[1] How far-sighted it was of Hildebrand not to remain content with his victory over the Emperor Henry IV., and to take steps to check effectually all future attempts made by the secular power to dominate the spiritual power, can be seen from a glance at the later history of the relations between the Church and the temporal rules of Europe. Alexander III., less than a century later, had to maintain himself against no fewer than two counter-popes set up by the Emperor Frederic I. And let us not forget the conduct of France, the violent removal of the Popes to Avignon in 1307, exile which ended with the deplorable "great schism." The papacy was always considered by the temporal rulers of Europe as a mere pawn in the great political game, in the struggle for political hegemony. It required all the efforts of numerous men of genius in the Chair of Peter in order to maintain the dignity and independence of the Church. Had Hildebrand not imposed the obligation of celibacy, inevitably would a papal dynasty have been established, as a branch either of the French dynasty or of the imperial dynasty. And we can see without difficulty to what results the exile in Avignon and the great schism would have led to, had not this exceedingly wise law of celibacy been introduced in time.

power come to be absorbed in the political—if it come to be a mere dependency of the latter—then is all efficacity *ipso facto* withdrawn from the moral power. The moral power is concerned with the education and moral development of humanity; the temporal power is concerned with the upkeep of order and the administration of the material interests of society. Neither of them is adapted to fulfil the functions of the other. The lamentable results of the subordination of the moral to the secular power, of that policy known as *Erastianism* after the name of an obscure advocate in the sixteenth century, were too well manifested in the history of the Church of France from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century—as they have been too well manifested, likewise, in the history of the Prussian Lutheran Church and of the Protestant Church of England—for it to be necessary to further insist on them here. For when the moral power becomes a mere dependency of the temporal power, then must the former necessarily lend the support of its sanction and approbation to all the acts of the latter, however immoral and antisocial such acts may be. The moral power thus loses all authority, it is degraded and rendered impotent. But the authority of the State is thereby itself undermined. For we have seen, in the course of this present book, that the rationalised individual, in the measure that he emancipates himself and becomes detached from society, needs a supra-social and supra-rational power in order to subordinate to itself that part of individual conduct which henceforth escapes social control. The authority of the State cannot penetrate beyond a limited number of material acts; and it is thus powerless to check that moral anarchy which must finally destroy the State. And if the State has deprived religion of all authority, by reducing it to a mere department of the State, then is the State *ipso facto* debarred from appealing to an efficacious moral principle for support.

It is a service for which humanity should be everlastingly grateful to the Catholic Church for having performed—the separation of the moral from the political power, and the consequent maintenance of the supreme dignity and independence of the moral power. For without such a separation, Western civilisation would never have been able to develop. Assuredly was it no indifferent matter that the spiritual or the temporal power should succeed in the long struggle, of which the conflicts between Hildebrand and the Emperor Henry IV., between Alexander III. and the Emperor Frederic I., between Archbishop à Becket and Henry II. of England, between Innocent XI. and Louis XIV. of France, between Pius VII. and Napoleon—of which the exile in Avignon, and the sack of Rome by the troops of the Emperor Charles V.; of which all these events were but episodes. For had the secular power succeeded in its persevering efforts to make of the papal see a mere fief, then would Western civilisation have fallen a speedy prey to disintegration and disruption. In the long centuries that separated the downfall of the Roman empire, in 476, from the dawn of the Renaissance, at the close of the fourteenth century—during all this long period the Church constituted the only basis whereon the fabric of the new civilisation, that arose from the dust of the old one, could be reared; during these hundreds of years the Church alone stood between this growing civilisation and a return to complete barbarism. Those who talk so glibly about "papal aggression" and "obscurantism" may be exceedingly deep in many things; assuredly are they not deep in history. Any one who is able to form even a remote conception of the tremendous labour required in order to build up a new civilisation on the ruins of the old one—of the stupendous efforts necessary to impose order and discipline on a wild and barbarous agglomeration of peoples—will understand that, even at the summit of her power in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Church had

but barely sufficient force for the carrying out of so herculean a task. When we contemplate the anarchy prevailing in Europe in the fifth century; when we take into adequate consideration the wild, uncouth, and undisciplined nature of the populations of Europe; when we see the economic, moral, and intellectual conditions prevalent all over the Western world after the abdication of the last Roman emperor; when we essay to penetrate the depths of economic, moral, and intellectual misery to which such conditions had reduced Western society—then must we marvel at the extraordinary power, at the incredible perseverance, thanks to which the Catholic Church caused a new civilisation, a new culture, to arise of the chaos—thanks to which the Church was able to cause the darkness to vanish, after many centuries, and to give place to the pure light of Christianity.

And never would the Church have been able to accomplish this gigantic task had she not known how to safeguard her independence — had she not known how to rise superior to the struggles and rivalries and intrigues of political rulers. In her far-seeing wisdom she edicted, as one of her fundamental laws, a rule whereby the individual is enjoined to fulfil his duties as citizen, to perform his obligations towards society; but she knew well that an indispensable condition of the maintenance of social order, is that the obligations of the governed find their counterpart in the obligations of the governing. To secure the punctual fulfilment of these reciprocal obligations, it is essential that there should exist a moral power superior to all classes of society—a moral power in which the indispensable ideal of social solidarity shall be incarnated. The individual can be disciplined, he can be made to subordinate his ends to social ends, only if he be dominated by a moral power; that is to say, by a power that derives its power from a law higher than any finite law—that is capable, in consequence, of subordinating to itself, in the interests of

the collectivity, that "rationalised personality" which escapes social control. The class can be adapted to its social functions —and the same holds good of all the subdivisions of society —only on condition that there exist a power superior to all such classes and to all such subdivisions; and which is able, by reason of its superiority, to ensure that the "sliding-scale of reciprocal duties," of which we spoke in the second chapter, is duly observed. The moral power, in other words, must be as superior to the upper classes of society as it is to the lower. And if it be reduced to the condition of a political vassal, of a mere department of the State, how is it to exercise authority over the governing classes, how is it to carry out its indispensable function of controlling and guiding the State? How is it to carry out its function of penetrating there where the State cannot penetrate, into the individual conscience—in which, in the absence of adequate supervision, the germs of moral anarchy cannot but develop?

It is, therefore, one of the chief lessons taught us by the Catholic Church: this lesson of the imperative necessity of separating the moral from the political, in order that the moral power may fulfil its great function of assuring social integration. If the moral power be not distinct from the political, if it be not superior to the latter, how is it to give to society an ideal that embraces all classes, that dominates all classes, even as it embraces and dominates the whole sphere of individual life? And in the absence of such an ideal, how is the solidarity of the various elements composing society to be realised, how is the integration of the individual in the collectivity to be realised? The chief cause of the weakness of the Church of France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lay precisely therein, that the Church was degraded to the rank of handmaid of the political power; consequently was she unable to control that power, unable to guide it, unable to remonstrate with it, unable to hold up to French

society an ideal backed up by sufficient authority to restrain the spread of anarchy. Far from representing an ideal superior to all finite contingencies, an ideal in which all classes of the nation could unite — the Church of France, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, appeared as forming part of a corrupt and obsolete order of things, as the *apanage* of a corrupt court and a corrupt governing class. Had she remained true to the best traditions of the Catholic Church, the Church of France would perhaps have been able to stem the flowing tide, to arrest the movement of decay and degeneracy. As it was, she could not but be swept away by the storms of the Revolution—and she has never recovered anything like her former authority and *prestige* since.

The result of the confusion of the moral and the political is the same everywhere. The corroding influence of what is known as *erastianism* on the Prussian Lutheran Church is visible; for what is the Prussian Lutheran Church to-day if not a mass of dry bones? And we know that all that is best in the Protestant Church of England never ceases to protest against the interference of the State in matters ecclesiastical, never tires of denying the right of the State to exercise authority in the spiritual domain. Under the influence of that vicious Protestant principle which confounds the moral and the political, and reduces the Church to a mere handmaid of the State, the Anglican Church sank to the lowest level which can be attained by a spiritual body. We have only to look at the condition of this Church in the eighteenth and in the first half of the nineteenth century, in order to judge of the fatal effects of the confusion of two wholly distinct spheres of social life. Only since a regeneration was commenced in 1840, on the basis of Catholic principles and Catholic traditions, has the Anglican Church been pulled out of the mire into which "State protection" had dragged her.

Another great lesson taught us by the Catholic Church is

that conveyed by one of the essential principles on which the Catholic system is based—by the principle according to which aristocratism and democracy are combined in the ecclesiastical organisation. As we have already said, the organisation of the Church is aristocratic in that it is hierarchical; but it is also democratic in that the hierarchy is recruited, in all its branches, among all classes of the population. Heredity being suppressed, the efficacity of the ecclesiastical organisation depends solely on the rigorous application of the principle of selection. All the various social organisations that have developed outside the Church in the Western world have been based either on the aristocratic or on the democratic principle; and the organisation which socialism projects for the society of to-morrow is based on what we may call the revolutionary principle; that differs very considerably from either of the other too, in that it substitutes for the hierarchy (*Übereinander*) of aristocratism, and for the stable equality (*Nebeneinander*) of democracy, an unstable and fluctuating *Gegeneinander* which negatives all idea of a durable equilibrium. The equilibrium realised by the aristocratic system responds incontestably to social needs; but the aristocracies which history has known have erred in the methods employed in order to maintain this equilibrium. The equilibrium realised by democracy, on the other hand, can be realised only at the expense of the existence of society—it corresponds in the social organism to that final equilibrium which, in a biological organism, we call death. The system adopted by the Church consists in a widening of the principles of aristocratism by the application of the one principle which, in democracy, is acceptable—namely, the adaptation of capacity to function irrespective of all considerations of birth rank. Borrowing from democracy this one essentially sane principle, the Church unhesitatingly rejects that other principle, which has come to dominate completely in modern democracy, and which

constitutes the most absolute antithesis of the former one—the principles, namely, whereby all men are reputed equal. The principle of the adaptation of capacity to function, irrespective of considerations of birth, is as incompatible with the ridiculous doctrine of equality as the latter doctrine is incompatible with the class dictature of socialist theory. The democratic and the socialistic systems are both inconsistent with their respective premisses, and both are at least equally inconsistent with human welfare.

We have said that if the equilibrium realised by the aristocratic system in the social organisation responds to social needs; yet the aristocracies which history has known have erred in the methods employed in order to maintain this equilibrium. Incontestably can society survive only if the fundamental social law of inequality be duly observed; and the only system which is compatible with this law is the aristocratic or hierarchical system. Heredity doubtless plays a very considerable part in the maintenance of a hierarchy; but those who believe that the latter can be maintained solely by heredity, forget that heredity does not *per se* ensure fitness. In order that heredity may produce favourable results, it is indispensable that all biological defects be rigorously excluded. In a consanguineous caste, fitness will only be ensured as long as biological degeneracy has not set in; if such degeneracy has once set in, consanguineous unions will but enhance and aggravate it, and heredity then becomes a dangerous instrument of regression. Seeing the extreme difficulty of avoiding the introduction of all inferior biological elements in the course of evolution, the creation of a "closed aristocracy," such as the caste, is a dangerous experiment. An essential condition of the survival of an aristocracy is, on the contrary, that such an aristocracy be "open"—that the effects of heredity be corrected, so to speak, by the constant recruiting of new members from outside. But this is precisely what

almost every aristocracy known to history has vehemently opposed. Jealous of its privileges, proud of its traditions, proud of its blue blood, an aristocracy is almost invariably hostile to the introduction of "outsiders" into its midst; lacking in foresight, an aristocracy is scarcely ever able to see that such an introduction of "outsiders" is necessary in its own interests, in order to rejuvenate it. And thus it is that the aristocracies of Greece and Rome, and all the aristocracies of Europe—with the exception, perhaps, of the British, Austrian, and Hungarian — have withered and decayed; because all of them have refused to recognise that heredity alone is not a guarantee of fitness, but that heredity must constantly be completed by selection. And unless the three last mentioned, the sole surviving aristocracies in Europe worthy of the name, take account in time of the ineluctable necessities imposed by Nature, they will share the fate of the others in no very distant future.

Capacity should in all cases be adapted to function; this is an elementary truth. And it is certain that the mere heredity of functions does not imply the heredity of the capacity to fulfil such functions. Yet such is the error into which aristocracies fall, and which is the cause of their ruin. The bourgeois *régime*, which throws open the various posts in the social hierarchy to all, at least nominally, and which makes the obtaining of a post dependent solely on a competitive examination, regardless of a candidate's birth; appears more in harmony with the exigencies of natural law. We will not insist on the notorious fact that success in a competitive examination by no means implies the successful candidate's fitness for any given functions; for it is now admitted by every one, except apparently by the unteachable officials of Ministries of Public Instruction, that an examination is rarely of the slightest value as a test of ability. We will admit, for the sake of argument, that the successful

candidate at a public examination is always the "right man in the right place," as the popular saying has it. But bourgeois *régime,* in our contemporary democratic societies, takes away with one hand what it gives with the other, if we may thus express ourselves. It enables the proper man to secure the proper place, it thereby adapts capacity to function—we admit for the sake of argument. But, on the other hand, it fails entirely to invest this man with the authority essential to the adequate fulfilment of his functions. For our contemporary democratic societies are undermined by the effects of the vicious and contradictory principles on which they are built up—principles which, deriving as they do from the superstition of equality, are subversive of all idea of authority. How can a hierarchy exist in anything but name, how can authority be anything but a farce, in a society which is founded on the idea of equality? Nowhere do we see the contradiction better exemplified than in France, that is to say, in the country in which democratic principles have been carried to their most extreme and logical consequences. Equality being, despite all theories, radically impossible in fact, the French democracy has been compelled to institute a hierarchy of functions exactly similar to that in any monarchical country. But this hierarchy is devoid of any vestige of real authority—for the seed sown by equalitarian teaching has not been sown in vain; and respect for authority of any sort is considered in France to-day as an antique and grotesque superstition, as a survival of that "monkish obscurantism" which it is the duty of every self-respecting man to emancipate himself from.

If we take the one case of the executive power in contemporary democratic societies, we see at once the hopelessness of endeavouring to institute a hierarchy in a society founded on equalitarian principles. For the existence of a hierarchy implies the existence of authority; and authority is wholly

lacking in such a society. If the United States have been wise enough not to admit the doctrine of the responsibility of ministers towards Congress, this certainly speaks highly for the prudence and foresight of those illustrious men who drew up the constitution of the American republic; but it is none the less inconsistent with the equalitarian principles of democratic government—with the principles of government by the divine right of the sovereign people. Let us take the case of ultra-democratic France. Under the influence of democratic doctrines, the theory of the responsibility of the executive to the legislative power has been pushed to such an extent, that the instability of ministries in the third republic is proverbial The nominal rulers of the nation are entirely in the hands of a popular assembly, which latter is in its turn at the mercy of the multitude—or, at the best, of a number of wirepullers and manipulators, political stockjobbers and fishers in troubled waters, who exploit the credulity and imbecility of the electors. The result is anarchy in the highest political sphere, an anarchy that is reflected in the whole public life of the nation; in the incoherence and impotence of Parliament; in the constant capitulation of the constituted authorities before threats of violence from outside; in the absence of discipline and of all respect for order of any sort, of which the Post Office strike in 1909, the railroad strike in 1910, the propaganda of the General Confederation of Labour with its accompaniments of chronic strikes, violence, and *sabotage*, antipatriotism and the terrorising of workers all over France, are so many symptoms. In an article commenting on the pardon accorded to Durand, one of the leaders of the dockers' syndicate at Le Havre, who was sentenced to death in November 1910 for complicity in the assassination of a workman named Dongé, murdered on the quays of Le Havre for having refused to join in the strike ordered by the dockers' syndicate — the Paris *Opinion* of February 7, 1911, observed:—

" En vérité la bourgeoisie, débordée par ses propres principes, n'est plus en mesure de se défendre. Dès qu'elle frappe, la pitié la saisit et la paralyse. Dès qu'elle n'est plus menacée, elle se laisse gagner par la bonté, qui est ordinairement la vertu des gens satisfaits. Ajoutez à cela le désir constant qu'ont les propriétaires de ne pas se créer de soucis au delà de leur propre existence, et vous aurez toute la psychologie d'une classe qui se meurt de faiblesse."

The fact is that democratic government is radically incapable of instituting authority of any sort, for the democratic system lacks all principles whereby liberty may be limited. Based on such principles, democracy cannot but lead to social disintegration and disruption ; and such is the case in France. Lacking in all authority, unable to appeal to any principles whereby liberty may be limited and discipline imposed, French democracy has seen, during thirty years, disorder and anarchy gradually spread, until the whole edifice of French civilisation is undermined. Chronic strikes wantonly declared without economic justification; indiscipline in all branches of the public services; the incredible tyranny exercised by the revolutionary labour syndicates, and to check which the constituted authorities are powerless; the systematic undermining of the fundamental ideas of social solidarity, such as the idea of patriotism; the disorganisation of family life, and the incoherence and corruption of political life — such are some of the symptoms by which the bankruptcy of the democratic system of government in France may be recognised. And this bankruptcy is due to the lack of all principles whereon Authority, indispensable to the maintenance of social integration, may be based.

In Germany, authority is still maintained, as it is in Austria, by means of physical force. It is not good, however, for authority to lack foundations of a moral nature, and to be dependent only on the pressure exerted by guns and bayonets.

True, both in the German Empire and in Austria a deeply embedded sentiment of patriotism, and long-acquired habits of discipline and order, lend valuable support to authority, and constitute a still effective barrier against anarchy. But, especially in Germany, ominous movements are at work which, if victorious, cannot fail to destroy this barrier and to seriously disintegrate German society: the sentiment of patriotism having been unable to restrain the egotism of the agrarian classes who govern, the notion of social duty is likewise weakened among the masses; and the necessity reveals itself always more clearly of a stronger link of social solidarity, of a more efficacious principle of authority and discipline. In Great Britain, the evils of democracy have up till now been held in check by means of a compromise between the principle of liberty and the principle of authority; but as to whether the sacrifice of the power of the House of Lords to demagogical agitation is a step calculated to strengthen the principle of authority, may well be doubted. And, in Great Britain, signs are not wanting of a relaxation of discipline, of a weakening of social solidarity. The introduction of antipatriotic and antimilitarist ideas into the programme of the Socialist party; the strike of the dockers in 1911, which paralysed trade and commerce in order that certain class interests might be satisfied —employers and employed alike failing to see that an agreement would be more advantageous for the national welfare than conflict carried to the bitter end; the strike of the railroad employees, also in 1911, which shows that British public servants are in danger of being contaminated by the virus of that spirit of class egotism or particularism that has borne such manifold evil fruit in France; and the calamitous general strike in the mines in 1912—these are symptoms which do not fail to tell a significant tale, and which point to future developments that are unlikely to enhance authority inside the country—and unlikely, in consequence,

to increase the much-vaunted *prestige* of Great Britain in the world.

The great problem confronting Western society to-day is not that of how to best safeguard and develop liberty; but the problem of how to best safeguard the great principle of authority—of how to safeguard that discipline without which social integration is an impossibility. And the only social organisation in our midst in which authority and discipline are adequately safeguarded, is the organisation of the Catholic Church. The latter is based on the hierarchical system, whereby alone capacity can be adapted to function; and, at the same time, the necessary authority is conferred on those whose function it is to command and to enforce order and discipline. The Catholic system combines all that is best in aristocratism, with the one sane principle of democracy. That system admits no "closed aristocracy," no caste. In it, the highest posts are open to all—for the only test is capacity. Pope Pius X. is the son of a simple peasant; Cardinal Gotti, the Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda, was the son of a Genoese docker; Cardinal Gruscha, the late Prince-Archbishop of Vienna, was the son of a shoemaker—these instances suffice to show us how "democratic" the Catholic system is in the best sense of the word. The Catholic hierarchy is recruited from among all classes, the superior elements of all classes are called to labour in the vineyard. Nothing, therefore, can be further from the truth than the assertion that the upper ranks of the Catholic hierarchy are the monopoly of the aristocracy or of the *grande bourgeoisie*. Into this capital error of all aristocratism, into the error of *exclusivism*, into the error of closing its ranks to "outsiders" —the Church has never fallen. That which, in the Catholic system, qualifies a man for a high post, for a post of trust and responsibility, is not birth, but capacity; whereas the error of aristocracies, as we have seen, has been invariably that of

regarding birth, and not capacity, as the sole qualification. As against modern democracy, on the other hand, the Catholic system not only proclaims the necessity of authority, but is founded on principles which permit of authority being duly enforced. Rejecting the pernicious doctrine of equality, the Church vests all authority in a supra-individual, supra-rational principle which is removed from the sphere of discussion, and which imposes itself as a categorical imperative.

## IV

At the close of this study we come, then, to the conclusion that Christianity constitutes a vital necessity for European civilisation; and that the form of Christianity adapted to the needs of Western society is not Protestantism, but Catholicism. For Catholicism alone possesses a social organisation, Catholicism alone is able to impose discipline and to secure the adequate integration of the individual in society, Catholicism alone constitutes a religion in the true sense of the word, in that it appeals to supra-rational principles. And if, on the one hand, Catholicism is alone able to subordinate the individual to society, to secure the sacrifice of individual interests to collective interests—on the other hand, it is alone able to satisfy the emotional and mystical needs of the individual soul.

It is this unique capacity of Catholicism, at once to safeguard social interests and to minister to individual wants, that explains its persistence throughout the centuries in spite of so many difficulties and of such violent opposition. Macaulay once wrote that on the far-distant day when a New Zealander shall contemplate the ruins of London Bridge, the Catholic Church will still be standing, unchangeable as ever. And it is a very remarkable fact, which cannot but afford much food for reflection to the student of human history, that the

Catholic Church has always withstood victoriously all the storms encountered, whether within the Catholic fold or without it. The Reformation movement, which bid fair to destroy the foundations of society, not only failed in its endeavour to sweep the Church out of existence, but was repulsed and forced to abandon a large part of the ground momentarily gained; and the net result of the wars of religion kindled by Protestantism, was distinctly unfavourable to the latter. The French Revolution likewise bid fair to destroy, if not the whole Church, at all events the Church of France; and yet, seven years after the desecration of Notre Dame de Paris by the hordes of Clootz and Chaumette, Napoleon signed the Concordat with Pius VII., whereby the Catholic religion was officially recognised as the religion of the State. If the Church has withstood such terrible storms as those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and of the Revolution, she may not unreasonably look forward with confidence to the future.

But the Church has not only had storms to weather from outside; she has also had storms inside the fold. As such we may reckon the unceasing attempts made, during the Middle Ages, alike by the emperors and by the kings of France, to subordinate the Church to the secular power, to incorporate the spiritual organisation in the organisation of the State. As such, also, we may reckon the doctrinal storms created by Jansenism, by the infallibility controversy, by modernism, etc. All these storms, whether great or small, the Church has likewise survived. It is curious and interesting to observe that none of the attempts made to secure a scission within the Catholic Church, with the one exception of the Protestant movement in the sixteenth century, has ever succeeded. Gallicanism, backed up by all the Bishops of France, including Bossuet, energetically supported by his Most Christian Majesty Louis XIV., and subsequently

by the Emperor Napoleon I., and appealing as it did to the national sentiment in France, was yet unable to survive, and has long since been nothing but an historical reminiscence. The same fate has, in recent times, awaited Americanism, despite the authority and influence of Archbishop Ireland. Who to-day remembers anything of the "German Catholic" agitation started by Ronge, in 1844—who knows anything about the so-called *Deutschkatholiken*? And the success of the *Altkatholizismus*, founded by Döllinger and other German theologians in 1870, as a protest against the infallibility dogma, has not been greater than that of its predecessor. The violent campaign undertaken by Bismarck against the Church on account of the decisions of the Vatican Council, in no wise furthered the separatist movement—and yet might one have expected the *Kulturkampf*, on the one hand, and the efforts of Döllinger and various Catholic University professors on the other hand, to produce the desired result of weakening the Catholic Church in Germany. If Bismarck and Döllinger combined did not succeed; if Bismarck had to surrender his arms and make a moral pilgrimage to Canossa—it is not surprising that the ridiculous separatist movement set on foot by a handful of obscure individuals in France, in 1906, with the object of founding a "national French Catholic Church" by way of protest against the refusal of the Holy See to accept the Separation Law, ended in a pitiable farce.

Whereas Protestantism, which possesses no cohesion, no authority, no discipline, has been broken up into some four hundred sects; the Catholic organisation, on the other hand, appears to be proof against all attempts made to create a scission within the Catholic Church. When we bear in mind the innumerable predictions made with the utmost confidence in and after 1870, to the effect that the infallibility dogma would inevitably have as a result the creation of an irremediable schism, and the alienation of all intelligent

Catholics from the Church—we shall be in a better position to appreciate the value of the predictions made at the present day, to the effect that the condemnation of modernism signifies the ruin of Catholicism. It may appear strange that a doctrine which is so questionable, when viewed from an historical point of view, as the doctrine of papal infallibility, should nevertheless have been accepted with docility by the quasi-unanimity of Catholics, and more especially by those eminent men—such as Strossmayer, Newman, Dupanloup —who most vigorously criticised and opposed it. But this acceptance of the doctrine, once the latter had been propounded as dogma, this submission even of its leading opponents to the voice of authority, is truly a magnificent example of the strength inherent to the Catholic organisation, of the wonderful integration of the individual in the collectivity secured by Catholicism. And if the integrating power of the latter was sufficient to secure the acceptance of the infallibility dogma, we may be sure of its ability to secure the acceptance of the anti-modernist edict of 1910.

We see once more the necessity of judging a religious system from a sociological, and not from a theological point of view, when we come to consider the question of the dogma of papal infallibility. Only when we place ourselves at the standpoint of the sociologist, can we succeed in appreciating the value of any given doctrine according to the only objective criterion which we possess whereby to judge of it —according to its utility for the society for which it is destined. Considered from an historico-theological point of view, the dogma of papal infallibility appears very questionable; but considered from the point of view of its utility for Catholic society, this dogma appears to us under a different aspect. In a vast international organisation like the Catholic Church, it is essential that power be centralised—it is essential that a strong centripetal force exist in order to counterbalance the tendency

to disaggregation that cannot fail to exist, at all events in a latent condition, in so extensive an organisation. Especially at the present time, when the Church is exposed to so many dangers, when she is the object of so many attacks, is it necessary that powerful discipline prevail in her ranks; for only by means of such discipline, only by means of the strongest cohesion and of the most efficacious integration of the individual in the whole, can the survival of the Church in the midst of a hostile environment be ensured. Whenever a social group is menaced, whenever such a group is forced to take up a defensive attitude, we see it shrink together, so to speak—we see its members assemble in a compact mass behind their leaders. And the less leaders there are the better; for it is a truism that divided counsels spell anarchy and incoherence, consequently annihilation. Infinitely more advantageous for Catholicism in the *Sturm und Drang* of modern times is it to possess one unique central organisation—for Catholics to obey one unique voice, to look to one unique leader for direction. And the necessity of exalting the moral power of the Pope appears the greater, when we take into consideration the reduction of his material power. To the confiscation of the Papal states by *la giovine Italia* must sooner or later have responded the proclamation of papal infallibility—the material diminution of the Pope would in any case have had to be counterbalanced by the moral exaltation of the Holy Father. Thus when we consider the dogma of papal infallibility from a sociological point of view, we find it fully justified; for centralisation of authority corresponds to the necessities of the Catholic Church in modern times, which can survive only on condition that she be strongly integrated; and integration is evidently stronger, discipline is evidently greater, if a society be submitted to a strong central authority.

In order to prevent all misunderstanding, it is necessary

that we should add that we by no means imply that Western society, if it is to survive, must needs go back to the Middle Ages, and re-establish complete religious homogeneity under the authority of the Papal See. The mere enunciation of such a proposition, of such a *desideratum*, would be monstrous. Most certainly can no sane person expect to see the universal domination of the Catholic Church re-established. What we mean, is that every effort made with a view to securing the greater integration and cohesion of Western society, to placing efficient restraints on an individualism which threatens to undermine the fabric of our civilisation, must needs *be based on the same principles as those which inspired the Catholic Church in her work of building up and consolidating European society.* The social hierarchy must be maintained, for in the hierarchy alone can the principle of authority be embodied and find adequate expression; the recruiting of the diverse categories of the social hierarchy must be proceeded with in strict accordance with the law of selection, for hereby can alone the adaptation of capacity to function be assured; the moral sphere must be separated from the political sphere, and the moral law must be recognised as superior to all political contingencies; the entire life of the self-assertive individual must be dominated by an ideal which is supra-individual in its nature, which is capable of disciplining the individual, and of ensuring his subordination to social ends. These are the main principles of the Catholic tradition, of the Catholic organisation—principles whose validity holds good for all times and in all places.

The religious organisation changes its structure and its form in the course of evolution, for it must needs adapt itself to modified conditions, and it is subject, like everything else, to the law of development. The Catholic structure, considered as a *dogmatic* edifice, will evidently never again include the whole of Western society—will evidently never regain its former

dimensions. The sociologist has no need to enter into questions of dogma, and, indeed, he is entirely incompetent to judge of them. Our task has been that of examining the sociological value of Christianity, and we have come to recognise in Christianity, and particularly in Catholic Christianity, an indispensable factor of Western civilisation—nay, we have seen Christianity to constitute the basis of that civilisation, the main instrument of its survival and consolidation. But, while fully recognising and insisting upon the immense services rendered by the Catholic Church to Western civilisation, we must not allow any personal proclivities to lead us to indulge in chimeric aspirations or illusory hopes. The integrating force of Western civilisation in the future will *not* be the Christian religion, *considered as a system of dogmatic religious beliefs*: in other words, the cohesion of Western society will not, in the future, be assured by universal assent to certain dogmas concerning the Incarnation, the Redemption, or the Immaculate Conception. But, as long as Western society is to survive, it must continue to be based on those fundamental principles of government which Christianity, and particularly Catholic Christianity, enunciated — on those fundamental traditions of social policy which we owe to the genius of the Catholic Church. Of the social teaching of Jesus, and of the great principles of social organisation and government derived from that teaching, the words of the Master are true: *coelum et terra transibunt, verba autem mea non transibunt.*

## NOTE

With regard to the force of expansion inherent to Catholicism, and which, far from being exhausted, is as active to-day as it ever was, we may quote the words of M. J. Bricout, by which he resumes the progress accomplished within the last fifty years by Catholic propaganda :—

"Plus de deux cent cinquante nouveaux sièges épiscopaux, près de deux cents nouveaux vicariats ou préfectures apostoliques ; le continent noir, l'Asie centrale, les îles perdues de l'Océanie s'ouvrant pour la

première fois à la prédication des apôtres du Christ ; et pour dire le mot qui résume tout, plus de vingt-cinq millions de nouveaux chrétiens devenus les sujets de la Propagande, qui en comptait à peine cinq millions il y a un siècle : voilà des résultats acquis, palpables, indéniables, qui montrent qu'au cours du dernier siècle, l'apostolat catholique n'a pas perdu tout à fait son temps." [1]

Those who talk so glibly about the extinction of Catholicism, forget the immense power of expansion possessed by the latter, and which is in every organism a proof, not of decay, but of vitality. This expansive power of Catholicism does not only manifest itself in the increase of the material number of its adherents, in the activity of its propaganda in all countries of the globe, in the progress made by it in America, in Prussia, in Great Britain,[2] but also in the development of the social and intellectual activity of the Church.[3] This is not the place to go into details on the subject, but the names of Lavigerie (Algiers), Ketteler (Mayence), Gibbons (Baltimore), Manning (London), among Catholic prelates ; of Vogelsang and Lueger (Austria), Decurtins (Switzerland), de Mun, Lorin, Sangnier, Gayraud, Lemire (France), among Catholic clergy and laity, remind us of the activity of Catholics in the domain of social policy. As for the intellectual activity of Catholics, the names of Pasteur, de Lapparent, Branly (the inventor of wireless telegraphy), Brunetière, de Ruville, Duchesne, Scheil—it would be invidious to cite others—suffice to show us that the statement to be read so often in certain papers of the lowest category, to the effect that "to be intelligent is to cease to be a Catholic," is simply grotesque. And we do not speak of Catholic theological activity, which a sociologist is incompetent to appreciate.

---

[1] J. Bricout et Collaborateurs, *Où en est l'histoire des religions ?* t. ii. p. 498 (1911). For a succinct account of the progress of Catholicism in all domains of activity, see pp. 497-597.

[2] The census in Prussia shows the following results :—

*Classification of Inhabitants according to Religion (per 1000 Inhabitants).*

| | *Protestants.* | *Catholics.* |
|---|---|---|
| 1871 | 649 | 336 |
| 1890 | 642 | 342 |
| 1910 | 618 | 363 |

During the period 1905–1910 the increase in the number of Catholic inhabitants has been 9·22 per cent, that of the Protestant inhabitants only 6·38 per cent. A similar movement of Catholic progression and Protestant regression is observable in the whole German empire. In the States and in Great Britain there is no religious census, and it is more difficult to estimate the increase in the number of Catholic inhabitants ; an increase is everywhere admitted, but it is problematical as to whether this increase is anything more than a natural increase taking place in proportion to the increase in the total number of inhabitants. The number of Catholics in the States is estimated at about 15,000,000, in Great Britain (Ireland of course excluded) at about 2,000,000.

[3] For an account of the fertile social activity of the Church in Belgium, see A. Verhaeren, *Vingt-cinq ans de politique sociale*, avec Préface de M. le comte A. de Mun (1912).

# CHAPTER X

## CONCLUSIONS

At the close of our study of the sociological value of religion in general, and of the Christian religion in particular, it may be well to resume as briefly as possible the main ideas developed in the course of the foregoing chapters.

In primitive societies, the individual is entirely absorbed in the group. His individual existence, his individual thought, are reduced to the lowest possible *minimum*—he exists and he thinks only as a social element, as the member of a social aggregate. At this stage of social evolution, collective thought is the only form of organised thought; and this first organisation of thought, whereby the collectivity first arrives at the consciousness of its existence as a collectivity, that is to say, as something *sui generis* which differentiates itself from the individuals who compose the social aggregate—this first organisation of thought is a religious organisation. By religion and through religion does society arrive at a consciousness of its existence; in its religious beliefs does society first see itself reflected, so to speak—by means of its religious beliefs is society first organised. Religion thus constitutes the symbol of collective existence; it is the instrument whereby the collectivity organises itself, whereby the unity of the collectivity is assured.

The individual is thus absorbed in the group; at this stage there exists no rudiment of an organisation of individual

thought, which could counterbalance the organisation of collective thought; and the individual has no notion of an autonomous existence, that is to say, of an existence as individual, and not merely as member of a social aggregate. Under these conditions, the rigorous subordination of the individual to collective ends is easy; it is easy to place him under a rigid discipline, to strongly integrate him in a society by which he is completely dominated.

The more the collective representations which impose themselves in early stages of culture lose their authority; the more the individual tends to organise his thought on a personal basis by means of rational concepts, and consequently to detach himself from social control; the more difficult does the subjection of the individual to discipline of any kind become. In the measure that society evolves, the individual tends to differentiate himself ever more and more from the group; thought tends to individualise itself, to emancipate itself from the yoke of the collective representations; and in the measure that he *individualises* himself, that he becomes conscious of his strength and of his rights, the individual will consent ever less and less to sacrifice his interests to ends exterior to himself. The maintenance of social discipline, of social integration, is thus far more difficult in civilised societies than in uncivilised ones; for in these latter the problem of the antagonism between the individual and society does not arise, seeing that the individual does not exist otherwise than as a cell of the social organism.

In both civilised and uncivilised societies, the integration of the aggregate is assured by the prevalence of collective beliefs, which are of a religious nature; but such religious beliefs change their forms in order to adapt themselves to the necessities of a modified environment. In the measure that the individual detaches himself from the collectivity, religion tends likewise to differentiate itself from society.

The origins of society confound themselves with the origins of religious belief, seeing that it is as a religious organisation that society first arrives at the consciousness of its existence; during the first stages of social evolution, religion and society are co-extensive with each other — religious thought is equivalent to social thought, and *vice versa*. Later on, religious thought extends its limits, it is no longer contained within the bounds of what we may term social thought; religion is no longer limited by society, and the former assimilates unto itself elements of a moral nature. If all ethical elements are absent from primitive beliefs, this is due to the fact that ethics are superfluous in primitive culture, seeing that they have there no social function to fulfil. The purely material, automatic sanctions which society applies to delictuous acts, principally by means of the *taboo*, suffice in order to guarantee the repression of all indiscipline. The moral law only develops itself later, and in response to new needs and necessities. If religion takes on subsequently an ethical character, it is in order to be able to continue to dominate the individual, who detaches himself ever more and more from the collectivity. The object of the moral law is that of *subordinating directly to itself that part of individual conduct which, as a consequence of individual emancipation, henceforth escapes all social control.* The moral law must therefore present itself to the individual as something higher than society, as possessing an authority which is greater than the authority of society. When we, however, come to analyse its nature, we shall find that the moral law, like all other religious conceptions, is a collective creation; we shall find that the moral law is constituted, so to speak, by the projection of the authority of the social aggregate into a higher sphere, that is to say, into the sphere of the Infinite and Absolute, where such authority shall be removed from the possibility of rational criticism.

Religion, as also the moral law, which originates in religious beliefs and which is of an essentially religious nature; is therefore a collective creation, an instrument shaped by the collectivity for the defence and furtherance of collective interests. It does not exist for the benefit of the individual. If the individual profits by it, this is exclusively in the latest forms of ethical religious belief; and even here such profit as may accrue to the individual is a wholly secondary consideration. If Christianity consoles and rewards the individual, this is in order to better induce him to sacrifice egotistical interests to collective ends. Religion being a social creation, and responding to social wants and necessities, cannot have the individual as its basis; it is not in the individual conscience, in the "individual searching after truth," that we are to look for the origin of religious belief or for the assizes of the moral law. Religious beliefs are fabricated by the collective mind, they are the fruit of collective representations that are imposed on the individual from outside. In primitive societies, where the individual is so solidly integrated in the whole that he has practically no existence outside the group, the individual unquestioningly accepts all the collective representations, and all the rules affecting conduct that derive from such representations; for he is entirely dominated by the collective mind. In later stages, the individual accepts less easily such representations; and the latter, in order to impose themselves must change their form and take account of individual interests, offering compensation for the sacrifice of such interests. Yet is this ministration to individual needs a wholly secondary aspect of religious beliefs; and the latter never cease to have as main function the furtherance of the welfare of society.

Viewed from the standpoint of the individual, religious and ethical beliefs have no significance. All those acts which the moral conscience of civilised humanity condemns most strongly are merely delictuous with regard to the necessities

of a society placed under certain conditions of existence, that are themselves the result of a long evolutionary process. *Were the individual alone to be considered, there would be no such thing as an immoral act*—for every act reputed immoral is thus condemned solely because it affects the welfare of other individuals; that is to say, because the interests of society come into play. When we descend to the primitive stages of social culture, we see very clearly that murder, incest, adultery, theft, and other such acts, are condemned solely because of their incompatibility with social needs, without any ethical notions intervening.[1] Ethical law, as we have said, is but a later adjunction to social law, an ulterior extension and completion of the latter, rendered necessary by the development of rationalism and the consequent diminution of the efficacity of social control. But let us never overlook the origins of ethical law, never forget that the latter exists only because it responds to collective necessities — never forget that, like unto all religious beliefs, ethical notions are a weapon forged by society for the defence and furtherance of social needs.

[1] It is to be noted that murder, incest, adultery, theft, and all the other acts that European laws and morals condemn, are by no means universally reprobated. There is no such thing as an act which is delictuous *per se*—an act condemned as delictuous *quod semper, quod ubique, quod omnibus*. Even in certain parts of contemporary Europe, where the vendetta survives, murder is considered as a sacred duty to be fulfilled. And contemporary Europe admits not merely isolated, but wholesale, murder when the interests of society are at stake—for war is nothing else but organised wholesale murder. Incest was practised in the reigning houses of Egypt, Peru, Mexico, and was regarded as the only means of preserving the royal blood free from contamination; sister-marriage is no longer practised in Europe, but the consanguinous unions between the various European royal families certainly constitute incest in the second degree. As for adultery, it is evident that the conception of the same must be wholly different in a polygamous society to what it is in a monogamous one. The estimate of what is permissible or what is not permissible in the relations between the sexes, presents almost as many variations as there are societies. Lastly, as regards theft, if we find the latter condemned in numerous primitive societies, this is not due to the prevalence of any ethical notions, but to the purely material fear of certain magical consequences that are supposed to ensue if certain objects, which are *taboo*, be touched.

Christianity, like all other religions, is an instrument of social defence and integration. Never would the religion of Jesus have succeeded, never would it have triumphed over the vehemence of the antagonism which it encountered on its way, had it not responded very clearly and very exactly to urgent social necessities. Preached by Jesus, and its theory developed principally by the efforts of a few men of genius, Christianity is none the less a social creation. Its spread, its triumph over incredible difficulties, were the work of the collectivity, the fruit of the seed sown by Jesus among the anonymous multitude. Christianity triumphed because Western society was not yet in its entirety degenerate, because the germs of decay that infected the upper classes in Rome had not communicated themselves to the rest of the population—because there still existed a number of eugenic elements in Europe in which the instinct of survival was as yet intact. These elements might fuse and intermingle; and the result of the upheavals caused by the immigration of the Asiatic hordes, by the movements of as yet barbaric peoples, by the intercrossing and mixing up of heterogeneous races, might be the creation of a new society, with new tongues and a new culture: what is of importance is that precisely this new society, this new culture, arose to replace the vanished empire and the vanished civilisation. And they would not have arisen, Western society would inevitably have succumbed to the combined effects of the Asiatic immigrations and the Musulman invasions after the seventh century, had Christianity not triumphed in its struggle with egotism—had Christianity not given to Western society a new ideal, capable of securing anew its integration, of maintaining discipline and repressing insubordination.

The debt of the Western world to Christianity is a colossal one; for it is to Christianity that Western civilisation owes its survival—it is thanks to Christianity that this civilisation

was not swept completely and for all times out of existence, during the dark and troubled period that stretches from Caligula and Claudius down to Charlemagne, and beyond Charlemagne to Charles Martel. And even as it was Christianity which held aloof the torch of civilisation during these terrible centuries in which, amidst the wars and rumours of wars predicted by Jesus, amidst gloom and anarchy and desolation, the leaven of a new civilisation was fermenting, the foundations of a new civilisation were being laid—so was it Christianity which, after having ploughed and reaped and toiled in the field, enabled the seed sown to bring forth a harvest abundant; and so is it also Christianity which to-day as yesterday, as in the recesses of the past, stands before us as the bulwark of our civilisation, as the rampart against which the waves indeed do beat, around which the wind indeed does gather to a hurricane, and in which waves and wind have dug breaches ominous—but which still is erect, but which still bids defiance to the indefatigable onslaught of foes that know no rest.

Will the future still see the Cross erect, on which are inscribed the words: *In hoc signo vinces?* When Constantine encountered the army of Maxentius on the bridge over the Tiber, the Cross appeared to him in the heavens, and the mysterious light of its rays lit up the stormy sky, and a white-robed angel pointed to the words written with the gold of flames: *In hoc signo vinces.* And the vision of Constantine predicted true; for the cross of wood on which Jesus stretched his arms and died vanquished the world. This "piece of wood on a piece of wood," which Goethe contemptuously railed at, vanquished Rome and vanquished Europe, it vanquished Cæsar and it vanquished the multitude, and it united all the divers and heterogeneous elements of the Western world, warring and barbaric, proud and undisciplined, wild and uncouth, in the acknowledgment of a common faith and in the subordination to a common discipline.

But all this, we are told, appertains to the past—some add, to the dim and distant past. And most assuredly can no one guarantee the future. The fact that the disappearance of Christianity could not but entail the disappearance of that civilisation which is founded on Christianity, in itself tells us nothing as to the future. For the foresight of mankind is notoriously small, and the fear of consequences is very rarely sufficient to inhibit the imperious cravings of instinct in the individual. To suppose that the vast majority of individuals will ever abstain from an immediate gratification by reason of the consciousness of the fact that pleasure is a thing short-lived and illusory—a consciousness nevertheless derived from the experience of daily life—to suppose this, would be to fall into the most stupendous of errors. Rare are those who look beyond the pleasures of the day, rare are they whom the consciousness of the illusory nature of pleasure, and the fear of "pleasure's sad satiety," induce to abstain from seeking pleasure or from gratifying desires that present themselves. The fear of destroying civilisation as a consequence of destroying Christianity, will therefore never restrain the antichristian fanaticism of a considerable part of society.

We can reckon the less on fear of the consequences for Western civilisation, as a means whereby movements hostile to Christianity may be stemmed and checked, when we consider the widespread ignorance that prevails concerning the rudiments of social law—when we see all around us the belief prevailing that social progress is to be sought in the ever greater development of individualism, in the reduction of social authority to a *minimum*, in the unrestricted domination of rationalism. Obviously, if such views as these prevail, then must the dechristianisation of Western society appear as a thing desirable—nay, as necessary—in the interest of society itself. But this view is erroneous, because it is based on radically false premisses, on an entirely false conception of the relations

between the individual and the collectivity. It is assumed that if only the individual be enabled to develop his personality without let or hindrance, if only no limits be assigned to individual liberty save the vague limit indicated by John Stuart Mill of doing no harm to others—that if only these *desiderata* be granted, bliss and happiness will prevail on earth. And these assumptions imply another assumption, namely, that the welfare of society is dependent on the welfare of the individual. But we have seen that the interests of the individual and those of society stand in fundamental antagonism to each other; that if individual interests prevail over social interests, society will be disintegrated and finally destroyed; and that the destruction of society implies *ipso facto* the destruction of the individual, seeing that the latter can exist only in society. Hence does individual welfare depend on social welfare; hence does the survival of the individual depend on the subordination of individual happiness to social exigencies, on the sacrifice of individual ends to collective ends. And as the essential task of Christianity, as of all religions, consists in ensuring this subordination and sacrifice of the individual; so is the maintenance of Christianity indispensable to the continuity of our social existence.

In these troubled and uncertain times, when storm-clouds are gathering thick on the horizon, when the peals of the distant thunder can be distinctly heard, when the sultry and tempest-foreboding atmosphere is heavily charged with electricity; when the future of our Western civilisation lies before us as a dark and insolvable enigma, veiled not by the purple cloud that reflects the glories of the sinking sun and which, motionless in an azure sky, heralds the dawn of a to-morrow bright with light and hope, with the joy of work and the sunshine of success, but as an enigma veiled by a cloud sombre and terrifying, that portends evil and seems to conceal unto our inquiring and alarmed gaze the gates of hell of which

Jesus spoke—in such times as these, the Cross stands before us as it stood, so the legend tells us, illuminating the not less sombre and stormy sky, before Constantine. *In hoc signo vinces;* the words are true to-day, as they were true then, as they were true when Julian the Apostate, throwing dust into the air, cried out to the desert and to the firmament, which he took as witnesses from the world of the finite and from the world of the Infinite to the truth of what he said: *Thou hast vanquished, Galilean.* Those words are true to-day, because to-day, as in the past and in the future, society will only survive if it observe the immutable laws of which Christianity is the guardian—the laws of social existence, among which the subordination of the individual to higher ends, the necessity of suffering, the maintenance of authority and discipline, are to be inscribed.[1]

The only way in which society can be saved from destruction amidst the many perils that menace it, is by carefully combining the necessities of conservation with the necessities of adaptation. One of the most prodigious errors of our time, and one of the most mischievous, consists in the idea that the past history of a society is a negligable quantity, that the traditions of a society are merely so many impediments to progress, so much useless ballast to be thrown overboard with the least possible delay. But a society cannot detach itself from the past, cannot sever itself

[1] In this age of coarse materialism, it is well to recall the words of Jesus: *non in solo pane vivit homo . . . nolite thesaurizare vobis thesauros in terra, ubi aerugo et tinea demolitur, et ubi fures effodiunt et furantur.* It is for having forgotten these profound words that the bourgeoisie and the masses alike will experience nothing but disillusion and misery. When the day of the promised social revolution dawns, the masses will find out to their cost that the old authority, the old institutions, the old ideals, created by the wisdom, and amidst the intense sufferings, of past generations, spelt for the multitude greater blessing and greater happiness than the fallacious promises and the vain illusions of revolutionary demagogues. And the wrath of the masses will be then turned against those who, having promised bread, have given only stones—who, having extinguished the lights in the heavens, have extinguished also the lights on earth.

from its traditions; and if it is thus severed, then is it violently pulled up from its roots, then is it like unto the tree that the axe of the cutter has felled, then does it lack the sap of life, the *sève nourricière* without which no organism can exist. Society is an organism; like every organism it has its heredity; and like every organism it must seek in its heredity for the source of all vital strength, of all vital energy. The curse of modern democracy lies in the culpable ignoring of the great fact of social heredity. The Revolution of 1789 sought to cut away the tree of French society from the soil in which that tree had been planted in the remoteness of distant ages, in which it had grown and put forth branches that bore rich and variegated fruit, agreeable to the sight and agreeable to the taste. This great and venerable past, mellowed and sanctified by deeds of prowess and deeds of love, by the willing sacrifices and the noble ambitions of many generations; this immortal past, rendered holy by great names and great traditions, which stretches back far into the centuries, which links the present, with its hopes and aspirations, with its sorrows and joys, with its successes and disappointments, to the dim, crepuscular light that vanishes finally in those innermost recesses of history whither the eye of present-day man cannot penetrate; this past which reveals, if we only seek, the causes of the rise and greatness of the greatest of Western nations—this past it was which empty-headed demagogues, obscene pornographers, sanguinary assassins endeavoured to annihilate, of which it was sought to wipe out every trace, nay, every recollection. Can we conceive anything more barbarous, anything more insane? The agitators who led the Revolution, who excited the mob against defenceless men and defenceless women, who turned Notre Dame de Paris into a brothel, who thought that massacre and plunder, fire and riot were the means best adapted to reforming social injustice—how could we expect such as these to understand

anything of the laws to which all social life is invariably subject? They endeavoured to annihilate the past, to cut French society adrift from twelve centuries of heredity, and in so doing they laid the axe to the roots of the tree. The eighteenth century and the Revolution ran up a heavy bill, a bill that can only be paid, and that is effectually being paid, by the life-blood of the French nation.

But the fundamental heresy, the unpardonable error of the Revolution, which is costing France so dear—this heresy is spreading everywhere: for everywhere do we encounter the same ignorance of social law, the same incapacity to comprehend the vital necessities of society. Everywhere do we meet with the idea that society is something artificial, something which can be created, re-formed, remodelled, recast, according to the will of legislators, and by means of Acts of Parliament or ministerial decrees. No idea can be more abhorrent to the sociologist; and unfortunately is no idea more popular, for no idea is more flattering to personal ambition, more encouraging for all those, faddists and cranks and regenerators of mankind, who hope to see personal fads realised, and the personal inconveniences removed that are a natural consequence of inferiority. In view of the constant spread of this pernicious heresy, the sociologist should never tire of repeating the truth—the truth that society is not an artificial creation, but an organic creation, the result of long centuries of evolution and heredity, *the product of the past.* If a social aggregate be determined to sever itself from the past, to cut itself adrift from its traditions: then does that social aggregate *ipso facto* condemn itself to a speedy death.

Does this mean that society is therefore immobilised, that society must therefore remain stationary? Not so; for the immobilisation of society would imply that the latter is excepted from the universal law that applies to all organic life—the law of evolution; and society, as we have said, is not

outside the organic world, but is itself an organic type, an organic creation. Society evolves, unceasingly must social forms and social functions modify themselves in order to be adapted to modified conditions of existence. But the conditions of life themselves *vary within strict limits*; and consequently must the changes operated in order to secure adaptation to modified conditions be likewise limited. *Nowhere do we find the immutable laws of life to vary*—the only variations we find, refer to the relations which prevail between aggregates or between an aggregate and its environment. It is not in our power to modify the unvarying laws of nature; and when human folly seeks to place society in artificial conditions of existence, then will the arrogance of man discover that Nature is not to be frustrated of her rights, and that her revenge will be speedy and implacable. The adaptation of a social aggregate to modified environmental conditions is called forth by necessity of conforming ourselves to natural law; wholly different is it therefore to the attempts made by modern democracy to suppress such law. The modification of society in response to changes in the environment and in the conditions of life, being thus a process carried out in obedience to natural law, imperatively demands, as a *conditio sine qua non* of its success, that the fundamental law of nature, the great law of heredity, be duly respected. An adaptation which would fain leave out of consideration the factor heredity is not an adaptation, for any attempt to modify society without taking this factor into account, far from adapting society to the conditions of life, must result in the destruction of society. The adaptation of an organism means the placing of that organism in the most favourable conditions possible, in the conditions that most greatly enhance its chances of survival. But the attempt made to suppress a fundamental law of nature such as heredity signifies, as we know, anything but the increasing of an organism's capacity—consequently can

such an attempt never be justified by the pretext that thereby is it proposed to adapt an organism to new life-conditions.

The heredity of Europe, of Western civilisation, is a Christian heredity. The torch of the past lights up the present and the future. The experience of past generations, wisdom gathered up during long centuries of toil and strife, ceaseless efforts made to adapt society to its life-conditions, sagacity accumulated at the price of untold suffering and great sacrifices, of patience and unceasing labour—such is the patrimony of society, its moral patrimony which is not a whit less important than the biological patrimony. And even as the maintenance of the biological patrimony of society, of the biological fitness of the race, is indispensable to the survival of a social aggregate—so is also the maintenance of the moral patrimony. A nation bereft of its traditions, deprived of the stores of wealth heaped up by the efforts and tribulations of the past, is like unto a ship deprived of helm and compass, and abandoned to the mercy of the storm. Tradition is the compass of society; only when we of to-day see what those of yesterday and before yesterday did in order to put themselves into harmony with their life-conditions—only when we see what our forerunners did in order to solve that ever-present problem of the relations of the individual to society—only then we can hope to guide ourselves amidst the shadows and obscurity, amidst the rapids and the shallows. A great tradition is not a thing indifferent, whether in the life of society as a whole, or in the life of a family, or in the life of an individual. It represents, on the contrary, the result of constant and persevering endeavours, of indefatigable and dauntless efforts, made throughout a long past by successive generations, in order to solve the essential problems of social existence, in order to adapt society to its life-conditions, in order to secure a durable equilibrium between society and its environment. Therefore must tradition, this legacy of the past, this indispens-

able ancestral patrimony, this deep and clear source of vital force and energy, this sap of life without which society cannot but decay and perish—therefore must it be maintained, be constantly consulted, be jealously safeguarded, even as one safeguards a very dear and very rare and incalculably costly treasure. And the tradition of Western society is a Christian tradition, the moral patrimony of Western society is constituted by the inexhaustible treasure of which the foundations were laid by the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth.

When we look around us to-day, what spectacle meets our eyes? Not a cheerful one assuredly. Anarchy reigning everywhere, disorganisation and incoherence everywhere triumphant, egotism everywhere gaining ground and obscuring the fundamental notion of social solidarity. Anarchy in the economic sphere, anarchy in family life, anarchy in morals, anarchy in politics—everywhere the same absence of authority, the same absence of commanding ideals and integrating principles. Everywhere the individual pursuing his own ends regardless of higher interests, everywhere individual rights asserting themselves at the expense of social rights, everywhere the claims of the collectivity ignored. Society is broken up into a number of fractions at war with each other, and wholly unconscious of their essential solidarity as parts of one great whole. The post office strike in France in 1909, the railroad strike in 1910, the systematic undermining of patriotism, of all sense of discipline, of all notion of social responsibility—this all shows us how matters stand in democratic France. And in Great Britain, which has been held up to other countries as the model of a democracy, things are not bright, prospects are not reassuring. The railroad strike of 1911, the dockers' strike of the same year, the miners' strike of 1912, the threats of *sabotage* and violent destruction of property, the infiltration of socialism and insubordination into the Navy and Army—all these phenomena point to

grave dangers in the future, to perils that can sap the strength of British society, and which must inevitably do so, unless measures are taken in time to ameliorate matters. And just in the moment when the dangers inherent in democracy are manifesting themselves in Great Britain, even as they have long since manifested themselves in France, in the United States, in Italy, and elsewhere; just in this moment is the House of Lords, which has always been the ultimate barrier against popular excesses, the ultimate bulwark against anarchy, deprived of its authority and reduced to a mere shadow.[1]

Everywhere, in Europe as in America, we hear the same complaints, the same cry of alarm: the arrest of the population, originally confined to France, is now general; family life is

[1] It is to be observed that, from one point of view, the downfall of the House of Lords is certain to be applauded by all impartial and right-minded persons the world over—namely, from the point of view of the Irish nation. As long as the House of Lords wielded unlimited authority, all hope of obtaining justice for Ireland, of repairing—in a certain measure—centuries of tyranny and barbarism surpassing in cold-blooded ferocity the worst exploits of any other European nation in a conquered country, was undoubtedly vain. In the interests of the English, however, the suppression of an effective barrier against demagogy, against the revolutionary tyranny of labour syndicates, is to be regretted; and to what lengths such tyranny can go the English discovered in 1912, when the miners' unions forced the principle of the legal minimum salary down the throat of Government and Parliament. Later on it will be duly found out by the English how heavy is the price to be paid for such concessions to the revolution! Ireland is the fatality of English policy—and this is as it should be. Had the Irish nation been granted its legitimate autonomy in 1886 or 1893; had England not driven the Irish to desperation and made of the latter England's bitterest enemies, by centuries of massacre, spoliation, persecution, brigandage, and every sort of the vilest oppression—then would there not have been, in 1911, eighty Irishmen to seal the fate of the English Lords at Westminster; eighty Irishmen who turned the scales in favour of the Radical Government's proposals; eighty Irishmen who, brought by force into a foreign Parliament, dominate that Parliament and condemn the foreign oppressor to destroy his surest safeguard against internal disorganisation and disintegration; eighty Irishmen who, although essentially conservative in their social and political leanings, are nevertheless compelled to vote for revolutionary measures in a foreign country, as the only means of securing at long last justice for the Irish nation. The eighty Irishmen, who, by their votes at Westminster, secured a majority for the bill destroying the prerogatives of the English peerage, represented the Nemesis for English crime in Ireland.

everywhere tending to disorganise itself, everywhere are the duties and responsibilities entailed by marriage being ignored or neglected; political life, although not everywhere as corrupt as in France and in the United States, is everywhere degenerating into a means whereby idleness and imbecility may be rewarded at the expense of the community; and the *bourgeois* State, far from being what a State should be: that is to say, the synthesis of the manifold activities of all categories of citizens, the *Brennpunkt* in which all such activities, however divergent and heterogeneous, are united in the higher service of the collectivity—the *bourgeois* State is reduced to play the part of a policeman safeguarding the narrow and egotistical interests of a class. This State, far from representing the collectivity, does but represent a class, and the class of the potentates of wealth. Individualism is everywhere rampant; all the institutions of society are perverted from their original functions, and do but serve individual ends. Each for himself—and each is not only an end unto himself, but a law unto himself.

Anarchy—such is the evil from which we are suffering, such is the malady that is gangrening Western society. And this anarchy is but the inevitable result of the principles on which democracy is based—of principles that are inherently incapable of establishing authority, because they contain no basis whereon authority can be established. When Protestantism declared the individual conscience to be the sole judge of right and wrong—when it declared that the criterion of truth is within the individual; then did it *ipso facto* suppress all authority, for it forbade us to appeal to principles superior to the individual. And when modern democracy, which is the legitimate descendant of Protestantism, reduced the notion of authority to a mere question of majority, then did it likewise render all real authority illusory. What respect can an authority enjoy that has no other basis than the will of a

majority — what adequate sanction can be attached to an authority that to-morrow may be swept out of existence? The *bourgeoisie*, which could only hope to triumph, only hope to establish itself, once the notion of authority based on birth had been done away with, once the notion of "equality" had been admitted—the *bourgeoisie* set itself upon the throne, but the throne was lacking in a secure foundation, and will be precipitated into the abyss. *Bourgeois* government is based on an anomaly, on an insoluble contradiction. Having undermined all authority, having destroyed all the principles whereon authority can permanently be established, the *bourgeoisie* discovered, once it had conquered power, that it does not suffice to proclaim the rights of man, but that such rights imply the correlative notion of duty. But on what basis could the *bourgeoisie* hope to found this idea of duty? In its own endeavours to secure power, the *bourgeoisie* had destroyed all those traditional principles of authority, thanks to which egotism had long been held in check. It had proclaimed the right of the individual to liberty, to unlimited liberty; and it had eliminated, or endeavoured to eliminate, all those collective forces, all those collective beliefs, which acted as restraints on individual liberty. Profiting by the liberty obtained, profiting by the downfall of the traditional obstacles to liberty, the *bourgeoisie* succeeded in vesting in itself the power formerly in the hands of the monarchy, of the Church, and of the aristocracy. And then did the new rulers perceive the necessity of limiting, *in their own interests*, the liberty which they had declared illimited, and by means of which they had themselves attained to power. But henceforth could liberty only be restrained, henceforth could authority only be established, on an artificial basis—on the basis of brute force and bayonets. An authority that only reposes on the force of bayonets may maintain itself for a while—but it is an authority that lacks all stability. *To be efficacious, authority must not be*

*founded on force, but on moral persuasion, on the moral conviction of the governed.* Authority in the *bourgeois* State has not this basis, consequently does it lack stability; for the authority of the *bourgeoisie*, originally imposed by force, is maintained solely by force. Such an authority is palpably insufficient and inadequate, palpably incapable of responding to the needs of society.

Amidst the troubles and turmoils and strifes that surround us, and which point to grave events in the not far-distant future, one great institution, one great social force, still remains —weakened it is true, but still standing; and this institution is Christianity. Amidst the clouds that are gathering fast and thick on the horizon, in the dark and stormy sky that presages evil for to-morrow, we see a light, a star still shining amidst the ever-increasing obscurity—a star which holds out hope and bids us be not discouraged, even as the distant light in the watch-tower on the shore brings courage and hope to the sailor wrestling, on his frail barque, with the fury of wind and waves. Great and terrible were the dangers, appalling in their violence were the storms, that assailed Western society during the long centuries since the deposition of Romulus Augustulus, last and degenerate occupant of the throne of the Cæsars, by Odoaker; and yet Western society survived them. But we must not therefore suffer ourselves to be lulled into a false optimism — we must not neglect to take into account the immense changes that have been operated in the whole aspect of Western civilisation during the last hundred years. The discovery of the use to which electricity might be put, the introduction of the telegraph and the telephone, of the railroad and the automobile, have annihilated space and time, and rendered all the various elements which go to build up Western society intimately dependent on each other. In former times the annihilation of one group did not entrain any far-reaching consequences, did not imperil the existence of

other groups, did not reverberate like an echo throughout the length and breadth of society. Each group being isolated, communication with other groups being difficult, each forming therefore an autonomous entity, the elimination of one group affected very little, if at all, the other groups. How vastly different it is to-day, since the intellectual patrimony of humanity has been so immeasurably increased, since space and time no longer exist, since the intellectual, financial, industrial, and commercial relations between the different aggregates have been multiplied a million-fold, since the slightest disturbance in Pekin or Bankok has its immediate repercussion in Paris and London—how vastly different it is to-day, in this age of international intercommunication and interpenetration, to what it was in the former ages of national isolation, need certainly not be further insisted upon. Any misfortune befalling a great nation assumes at once the character of an international disaster; the disintegration and disruption of one nation are followed by the disintegration and disruption of the others. Folly would it be, folly worthy of the lowest species of the professionally patriotic Press, did any one nation of Western society rejoice at the decay of another nation. For the loss to civilisation implied by a weakening, not to speak of the disappearance, of a great and indispensable cultural entity—such as every nation of Western society undoubtedly is—would be as incalculable as it would be irreparable. And the catastrophe would naturally not remain isolated—it would herald the advent of similar catastrophes elsewhere, and the ultimate break up of the whole of Western society.

It is precisely the extraordinarily international character of contemporary civilisation which renders the dangers that menace this civilisation doubly great. The repercussion of the post office strike and of the railroad strike in France, has not tarried in making itself felt in Great Britain in the shape of the railroad strike in the latter country in 1911. And the

strike in Great Britain has certainly not been without effect on the proletarian masses in the German Empire, in Austria, and in Italy. When in one country a disorganisation and disintegration of society become visible, this disorganisation, this disintegration, tend to manifest themselves elsewhere. In the various nations that compose the great Western family on both sides of the ocean, social diseases are of a highly contagious nature. It is therefore far from being an indifferent matter to other nations when one of them is afflicted with disease; for the latter, unless repressed in time, will gain ground and spread with alarming rapidity, communicating far and wide the fatal germs.

We are told in season and out of season that a return to the past is impossible; and doubtless is this assertion a mere truism, if it is thereby meant that contemporary societies cannot reassume the structure which they had in past centuries, structure that has unceasingly been modified by the uninterrupted flow of the tide of evolution. But it is false, and radically false, if it is thereby meant that the past is not the great and inexhaustible source from which the present can draw its knowledge and its wisdom. The experience of the past, the experience accumulated by centuries of successive generations, is the torch that lights up the shadows of the present and that enables us to shape, to a certain extent, the future. Society has at all times been confronted by the redoubtable problem of the relations of the individual to the collectivity; and if this problem, by reason of the growth of the spirit of rationalism, is to-day more difficult to solve than formerly, then is there all the more reason for consulting the past, for endeavouring to steer the social barque by the help of the unique compass that is constituted by the experience of our forerunners. These had the same problem to solve, these were acquainted with the same perils and difficulties. And the problem is not susceptible of different solutions, the

laws of life remain invariable, the changes operated in the functions and structure of society are always strictly limited by those laws and by the necessity of rigorously conforming to them. Human nature is not subject to variation; and the problem of how to discipline it, of how to repress egotism, of how to establish authority, remains invariable likewise.

The history of civilisation shows us how the problem has been solved in the past: and the solution, like the problem, has never varied. Everywhere we can see discipline maintained by a religious authority, that is to say, by an authority that is of its nature supra-rational. Rationalism, being an essentially individual product, is impotent to impose authority on the individual, to reduce the latter to subordination. This remains true to-day as in the past. To-day, as formerly, recourse must be had to supra-rational and supra-individual principles in order to establish authority. And to-day is it especially urgent that authority be established, an authority based on principles that command universal moral assent and that are beyond the reach of rational criticism. The need of such authority is felt and admitted by the overwhelming majority of thinkers; but, despite the numerous endeavours unceasingly made, no satisfactory solution of this all-important problem has been arrived at, for the reason that almost all those who attempt to solve it seek to base authority on rational principles and to derive it from rational consent. Thus are we suffering to-day from the effects of the Protestant Reformation, which transformed the criterion of truth into a subjective one. It is evident that no solution of the problem can be arrived at, if we *a priori* refuse to ourselves the right of seeking beyond the limits of rationalism for the basis of authority. Authority cannot have a rationalist and a subjective basis, for it must needs impose itself on the individual from without, it must

needs exact the submission of the individual to a power higher than the latter and exterior to him. Otherwise is authority nothing but a synonym of the arbitrary decrees of the individual will.

Christianity, being an essentially social institution, could not but provide an adequate basis for the authority so necessary for social existence. In the Christian system, authority is represented as having its source in God; and God has delegated His supreme authority to the various hierarchical functionaries of the Church.[1] And not only the ecclesiastical dignitaries, but also the lay rulers, of whatever rank they may be, are likewise invested by God with their authority; the Church, during the Middle Ages, never ceased to remind the civil power of the subordination of all earthly might, however great, to a higher power *quia regnum non est de hoc mundo*.[2] Here, then, does authority possess a sufficient basis, here is it established on principles that at once guarantee its *prestige*. When we see the wonderful discipline that prevails within the Catholic Church of East and West, the rigorous subordination of each branch of the hierarchy to the branch above it, the unquestioning submission of clergy and laymen alike to the decisions of the supreme authority, whether Synod or Sovereign Pontiff; then indeed do we understand that the Catholic Church has solved the problem of how to enforce

[1] This is clearly shown by the words of Jesus to St. Peter: *Tibi dabo claves regni caelorum. Et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in caelis; et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in caelis.*

[2] The best example of the supremacy of the ecclesiastical power is furnished by the claim of the Holy See to be the natural possessor of all territories not belonging to the Christian patrimony of any of the European potentates. For instance, the Holy See, as natural possessor, disposes of Prussia and Lithuania, and "grants" these lands to the Order of German Knights; it was, again, the Holy See which, by the bull of Adrian V., "granted" Ireland to the English monarch. The bull in question was a forgery, but the English monarch found it advisable to have recourse to this forgery, to shelter his acts of piracy behind the authority of the Holy See. Numerous are the instances in which the Holy See, as natural possessor of all non-Christian lands, disposes of the latter and grants them—under the pretence of evangelisation—to European potentates.

discipline by moral persuasion—the problem of how to base authority on principles that command unquestioning respect and obedience because they command universal moral assent.

The question that we must put ourselves remains therefore this: In how far is Christianity, and more especially the Catholic Church, capable of influencing the society of to-morrow —what is the degree of influence which Catholicism is capable of bringing to bear on society in order to prevent the disintegration of the latter by reason of the absence of adequate authority? How far can we hope to see the Christian ideal penetrate society and dominate society? Having preserved Western society from total elimination, having reorganised and reconstructed it, having enabled it to survive so many perils and to overcome so many difficulties, Christianity is obviously the force best adapted to the needs of Western civilisation. In the great conflict of the near future between that civilisation and socialism, it will be found that the surest instrument of social defence, the most efficient of social forces, is Christianity. The diminution of the latter, the weakening of Christian influence all over Europe during the eighteenth century, had the Revolution and all the untoward consequences of the Revolution as a result. The weakening of Christianity prevented it from checking the *ancien régime* in France in its race towards the precipice; and this loss of power prevented it likewise from exerting its influence on the momentous social transformations which marked the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. These great social transformations, produced by the economic evolution of society, and determined by exclusively economic causes, carry with them the traces of their materialistic origin, and of a development uninfluenced by ethical forces. We have only to compare the social transformations of the end of the eighteenth century with those operated during the early Middle Ages, in order to see how

prodigious is the difference due to the absence of all influence of Christianity on the former. Whereas the great social transformations of the Middle Ages had as a result the consolidation of Western society, its integration and discipline, the substitution of order and organisation for anarchy and incoherence; the transformations that marked the advent of the industrial era and the conquest of power by the *bourgeoisie* have had the growth of rampant egotism, the obscuring of all notions of social duty and social discipline, the slackening of the bonds of social integration, as their inevitable consequence. The social transformations over which Christianity presided in the Middle Ages led to the reconstruction and reorganisation of Western society; the transformations effected in modern times independently of all Christian influence are leading rapidly to its disruption.

The astonishing *essor* of industry and commerce, the increase of wealth and prosperity, the expansion of Western society in the world—all these phenomena tended inevitably to increase egotism and to further the growth of materialism. With society as with the individual, moments of prosperity are also moments in which the earnestness of life, the meaning of the great problems which life sets before us, are lost sight of. There is a profound truth in the words of Goethe:

> Alles in der Welt lässt sich ertragen,
> Nur nicht eine Reihe von schönen Tagen.

Prosperity is not good for a nation, or for an individual, if it come too suddenly or if it be too prolonged. The vital force of a nation is diminished by too long or too sudden prosperity. But the accumulation of wealth has limits set to it; and it is certain that the twentieth century will see no increase in its riches at all comparable with the increase which the nineteenth century obtained by comparison with the eighteenth. And grave problems are awaiting solution: there are political

problems enough to be solved in Africa, in the Balkans, in Persia—and behind these political problems are the immense social questions of our times. War-clouds loom on the horizon, and the thunder of the approaching social revolution is heard ever more and more distinctly. The era of prosperity, of money-making, of peace, will not be for much longer; there is a tension in the atmosphere that can be relieved only by a tempest. And these strifes and bitter conflicts, political and social, which appear inevitable—there will be no reason to regret them if only they have as a result the reorganisation and re-integration of a society that, too long accustomed to prosperity, has fallen a prey to anarchy. We must never forget that strife is the great instrument of all social progress; the universal peace era dreamed of by cranks and faddists is an impossibility, or else it will be the beginning of the end of society. It is in the strife that awaits it, amidst the conflicts of to-morrow, that Western society will show its capacities—will show whether or not it is degenerate, whether or not it still has stores of vital energy intact. Only then will we be able to judge as to whether Western civilisation is in a position to maintain itself and its position in the world; if it is not able to do this, if a too prolonged spell of peace and prosperity has irremediably gangrened it, then must Western civilisation abdicate, then must it be eliminated, then must it disappear from the world's stage, and its place thereon will be taken by that Oriental civilisation which is at once so venerable and so young. Those who prefer living from day to day, and who dislike having their comfort and their ease of mind disturbed, affect to scoff at what is known as the Yellow Peril. Such as these are ripe for enlistment in the peace brigade. Those, on the other hand, who are not afraid to look ahead, not afraid to be brandmarked as pessimists, will come to the conclusion that the Yellow Peril is not a phantasm, but a reality. Here is not the place to go more deeply into the question. But certain it

is that, if Western society is to maintain itself in the struggle for the world hegemony with Eastern society, the former will have to reorganise itself, to discipline itself, to put an end to the anarchy that must otherwise prove its ruin. As we have said, the internal conflicts which await Western society will show the latter's value, will—so may it be hoped—prove a precious stimulant to an indispensable reorganisation. And this reorganisation can be carried out, if it is to be efficacious, only on Christian principles. After the storm and strife, after having endured the ordeal of fire and been put to the test of the sword—perhaps then will Western society recognise the necessity of returning to the traditions thanks to which it has evolved from out of the ruins of the Roman empire to those heights of culture, on the summits of which the proudest and loftiest movements of the human genius are to be contemplated and venerated.

THE END

*Printed by* R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh.*

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

# HEREDITY AND SELECTION IN SOCIOLOGY

One Volume. Pp. xxx-571.
Demy 8vo. Cloth. Price 12s. 6d. net (by post, 13s.).

## SOME COMMENTS OF THE PRESS

*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.*—"Many of the criticisms and suggestions which the author makes are very valuable and deserve attention. . . . The volume deserves the attention of all serious students."

*Glasgow Herald.*—"This able book . . . cannot fail to stimulate thought in many directions."

*Outlook* (London).—"It is rare to come across a book nowadays that deals with the biological and medical aspects of our social problems, and which displays at the same time in the author a real power of taking an informed and reasoned view of the nature of social evolution as a whole."

*Morning Post.*—"It is really to be hoped that the publication of this book means the making of a fresh start and the basing of future research and speculation upon what has been fairly established. . . . This most engrossing book. . . . We had intended writing at much greater length concerning a book that ought to be studied by every serious thinker, but the very impossibility of the task of doing it justice has checked us. . . . It is impossible in a brief review to do anything like justice to the variety and thoroughness of the author's work. . . . We earnestly commend it to our readers."

*Nature.*—"From beginning to end this is a most interesting book. . . . The book is a book to be read."

*Pall Mall Gazette.*—"Some of the chapters dealing with purely sociological problems show Dr. Chatterton-Hill at his best and are profoundly interesting."

*Tablet.*—"Perhaps the best concise *exposé* of Weismann's far-famed theory which we possess in English, and Dr. Chatterton-Hill unquestionably deserves great credit for the summary given in his book."

Dr. H. Campbell, F.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., in *British Journal of Inebriety.*—"This fascinating book. . . . Earnest workers in this difficult field, of the type of Dr. Chatterton-Hill, deserve the thanks of the community."

*Mr. Benjamin Kidd.*—"I have read your book from beginning to end with the deepest interest, and have found it most stimulating in producing thought in my own mind."

PUBLISHED BY
ADAM & CHARLES BLACK, 4 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.

# FIRST PRINCIPLES OF HEREDITY

BY

S. HERBERT, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Large Crown 8vo. Cloth.
Containing 75 Diagrams and Illustrations.
Price 5s. net (by post, 5s. 4d.).

---

## SOME PRESS OPINIONS

"Dr. Herbert's book can be recommended as a trustworthy 'first aid' in the study of a difficult subject. His style is lucid and concise, and he has provided a glossary which will be of service to many."—*Athenæum.*

"Dr. Herbert will be found a safe guide. He writes as clearly and as simply as may be upon a subject in which it is practically impossible to avoid technical language. . . . The book may be cordially recommended as admirably adapted for the class for whom it is intended."—*Westminster Gazette.*

"The appearance of this book should be welcomed. . . . May be recommended to all anxious to follow the course of modern speculation in the realm of heredity."—*Daily News.*

"A sound little treatise which will be found valuable by those who have little preliminary scientific training. What is actually known is succinctly set forth, and then follows a fair and impartial account of the theories of Spencer, Weismann, and Mendel, in which we should conjecture that the writer has been more influenced by Dr. J. A. Thomson—and a very good influence it is—than by any one else."—*Nation.*

"Dr. Herbert has produced a book which we think will be widely read and will also serve its original purpose as a text-book for elementary students very usefully. The text is clearly written, without any superfluous wordiness, and conveniently divided into sections. The diagrams and illustrations adopted from various sources have been judiciously chosen, and do much to throw light on the difficulties which so often puzzle beginners; and the printing and page are very pleasant."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"It is a book which any serious man or woman desirous of some introductory insight into these problems would profit by reading."—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

"Dr. Herbert's introductory manual can be confidently commended to all who are unacquainted with the subject. It is clear, and thorough, and fair, and it gives good descriptions and illustrations of the relevant groups of facts and the various theories advanced in regard to them. A glossary robs the dreadful jargon of the biologist of its terrors. The treatment of Biometrics, the statistical method developed by Galton and prosecuted by Pearson, is particularly enlightening."—*Liverpool Courier.*

---

PUBLISHED BY
ADAM & CHARLES BLACK, 4 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.

301C495s
The sociological value of Ch
00043520 5

301
C495s

123801

Chatterton-Hill, Georges.
The sociological value
of Christianity.

301
C495s

123801

Chatterton-Hill, Georges
The sociological va-
lue of Christianity.

08 28 6 SCOTCHMER P

01 15 9 TERR
T UKA EBELE

WITHDRAWN

DREW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
MADISON, NEW JERSEY